

SOUTHEASTERN ILLINOIS CONNECTION



Connect, Equip, and Inspire Presbyterians as we walk with Jesus Christ



General Assembly Co-Moderator Jan Edmiston to preach at November 16th Stated Meeting *(to be held at Monticello, First)*

The Rev. Jan Edmiston was born, raised, and educated in Chapel Hill, NC, where she grew up in the University Presbyterian Church. She attended Andover-Newton Theological School in Newton-Centre, Massachusetts and was ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament, having received a call to serve as pastor of the Presbyterian United Church of Schaghticoke, New York. She later earned a Doctor of Ministry in Christian Spirituality from Columbia Theological Seminary. Edmiston and her husband, the Rev. Fred Lyon moved to National Capital Presbytery in 1989 to serve as Designated Co-Pastors of Fairlington Presbyterian Church in Alexandria, VA. She served the congregation for twenty two years before moving with her husband to Chicago where he accepted a call in Flossmoor, Illinois. She currently serves as Associate Executive Presbyter for Ministry at the Presbytery of Chicago.

As General Assembly Co-Moderator, Jan plans to serve as examples of shared ministry in the denomination, in the hopes that what they model will be manageable and sustainable to a greater number of Ruling Elders and Teaching Elders.

Stated Clerk Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, II will attend the November 2018 Stated Meeting. Location TBA

223RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The 223rd General Assembly will be held June 16-23, 2018, St. Louis, MO.

If you are interested in attending as a Commissioner or YAAD, please contact the Presbytery office at 1-800-456-7734 or office@psei.net for an application.

Elections will be held at the November 16th Stated Meeting at Monticello, First. Deadline to submit application is October 30th. If you miss the deadline you can still be considered by bringing enough copies (100) of your application to the meeting and have them at the registration table between 8:30 and 9am.

*The 224th General Assembly (2020) will be held on
June 20-27, 2019 Baltimore, MD*

Timeline for submitting OVERTURES & applying to be a GA COMMISSIONER

180-day Deadline: December 17, 2017
(commissioners/YAADs)

120-day Deadline: February 16, 2018
(amendment to/interpretation of Book of Order)

60-day Deadline: April 17, 2018
(financial implications)

45-day Deadline: May 2, 2018
(all other overtures, comments)

FINANCIAL MINISTRY TASK FORCE (FMTF)

Stacy Tate (TE), Friedens UCC, presented the following FMTF report at the August 24th Stated Meeting

I want to briefly update you all about the progress being made by the newly renamed Financial Ministry Task Force. As you may know, the General Council created the FMTF a couple of years ago out of the recognition that our expenses were outpacing our income at a rate that threatened the Presbytery's financial viability – putting it another way, the revenues we have been receiving has not been enough to meet our expenses.

As you may know, religion is a people intensive task. Our goal has been to avoid sudden, radical, drastic cuts and to move in a deliberate, planned, and humane manner to adjust our expenses without increasing the per capita.

One action that members of the Presbytery have approved is that later this year the presbytery office will be transitioning from the current “physical” office location located in downtown Decatur to an online “virtual” office using a model built on the successful experiment in working “virtually” that the Stated Clerk, Presbyter for Congregational Care, and Treasurer having been transitioning into for several years. In the new virtual office, Brenda and Marsha will remain reachable by both phone and email as they continues to serve the presbytery in the same outstanding way they have for years. Then when Brenda retires next summer, the presbytery will dissolve the administrative assistant position and reallocate those tasks.

These efforts are designed to impact the presbytery's expenses while minimizing the impact on the services provided to congregations. If you have questions or concerns about this transition please talk to members of the General Council for more information.

Other changes are in the works as the Financial Ministry Task Force, Presbytery Council, and we in the Presbytery continue trying to discern the best ways to serve our 80+ constituent congregations.

The Presbytery of Southeastern Illinois Transitioning to Virtual Offices

We've reached another milestone on the way of being a virtual office. Our physical office will close at the end of October. There are a couple of changes though: Please email all vouchers, invoices, and check requests to invoices@psei.net – we'll check that mailbox daily and be able to respond more quickly to your requests. Please continue mailing checks to: Treasurer PSEI, ATTN: Paul Saegesser, 104 Oman Ct., Mattoon IL 61938. Please send any mail to: Stated Clerk PSEI, ATTN Cindy Bean, PO Box 82, Radom IL 62876.

The good news is that you can still reach us by the same phone numbers -1-800-456-7734, 217-423-1396, or 217-423-2811. Fax 217-423-2868 and email addresses that you have always used. Bill McLean - billmclean@psei.net; Cindy Bean – cindybean@psei.net; Paul Saegesser – paulsaegesser@psei.net; Dan Kingery – campcarew@gmail.com; Brenda Garry and Marsha Mower at office@psei.net.

Greenville, First Sanctuary

Photos by Michael Evanchak, Taylorville, First



ALBAN
AT DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL

Alban.org has a weekly e-newsletter that offers practical wisdom on how to lead congregations today. Click on the following link to subscribe

<https://visitor.r20.constantcontact.com/manage/optin?v=001yNBsj5sMLlvgxhjEUf-mg3eSiUJC3-OZbfFz-BhMFVp37hGm1RXiuJCL3FDWG6MfArX3T0PKe4z7zD5DtrUzJHXx5CknFv4oTh4ziZIB9I%3D>

Alban books are now available from publisher Rowman & Littlefield. The full Alban catalog includes books on congregational leadership, church size and its impact on dynamics, missions and outreach, and more. Click on the following link to learn more about Alban authors or to purchase Alban books: <http://rowman.com/>

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER

1st Session Records Review—Oakdale—3pm to 5pm
3rd Financial Management TF – Effingham - 10am
Personnel Meeting – 1pm to 3pm
Presbytery Planning Conference Call - 11:30am
5th Committee on Ministry (COM)—Mattoon—10am
8th Session Records Review—Eldorado—3pm to 5pm
10th Worship Team Conference Call 12:30
14th Camps & Conferences- Effingham – 9:30
19th General Council—Mattoon—10am
25th Interim Pastor's Meeting—Effingham—9:30
26th Boundary Training—9 to 3
30th Presbytery Meeting Packet Information Due

NOVEMBER

6th Presbytery Meeting Packet Posted
7th COM Leadership Meeting—Mt. Vernon - 10:30
16th Presbytery Meeting—Monticello—10am
22nd Interim Pastor's Meeting—Effingham—9:30
23rd-24th OFFICE CLOSED—Thanksgiving
30th COM Training

DECEMBER

5th COM Meeting—Mt. Vernon - 10:30
7th General Council Meeting
25-29 OFFICE CLOSED—Christmas

**Life asks no questions
that faith cannot answer.**
Daily Walk Bible

SESSION RECORDS REVIEWS

LAST OPPORTUNITY FOR THIS YEAR

Sunday, October 1st
3pm – 5pm – Oakdale, United

Sunday, October 8th
3pm – 5pm – Eldorado, First

BOUNDARY TRAINING OFFERED THROUGH THE SYNOD

These training session will apply toward the 3 year requirement for all pastoral leaders in PSEI.

The first two workshops will take place in Rossville, IN on Tuesday, October 17th, and in Indianapolis IN (at the synod office) on Wednesday, October 18th. They are hoping to schedule one in November somewhere in the bounds of Great Rivers Presbytery.

Registration deadline is October 9th via Eventbrite, and “please note” there is a separate event page for each location.

To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/synod-of-lincoln-trails-presbyterian-church-usa-8192490794>

***In addition, PSEI is offering BOUNDARY TRAINING
October 26 in Effingham from 9am – 3pm***

PRESBYTERIAN INVESTMENT AND LOAN PROGRAM (PILP) Provides low-cost loans for churches and other PC(USA) entities as well as investment opportunities that earn interest and expand the mission of the church. PILP has a no-cost, three-step consultation process that allows you to “sit down and count the cost” to determine the right-size loan or project for your church, saving you time, money and stress.

Click on the following link to learn more about allowing PILP to take a preliminary look at your project.
<https://pilp.pcusa.org/consultation/>

YOUR INVESTMENT SUPPORTS THE LOCAL CHURCH

Your investment in PILP continues to support churches by providing low-cost loans for renovations, new construction, and even refinancing of existing debt. Click on the following link to learn more <https://pilp.pcusa.org/invest/>

Do not pray that the poor be fed unless you are willing to provide the bread. *Daily Walk Bible*

2017 Clergy Effective Salaries Reports

The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has tabulated a range of effective salary data for 2017 to assist decision makers with reviewing clergy compensation.

Two reports are available:

- **Clergy Effective Salaries by Congregation Size and Years of Service** – Compares the effective salaries of full-time pastors and full-time associate pastors serving churches. Data is broken down both by congregation size and years since ordination.
- **Clergy Effective Salaries Compared by Synod** – Compares the effective salaries of full-time pastors and full-time associate pastors serving churches. Data is broken down by synod, congregation size, and years since ordination.

These reports are separate from the Board's salary study that reports effective salary information for various calculations under the Benefits Plan. For information based on that study, see the [Parish Ministry Salary Study](#), [2018 Median Effective Salaries Available](#) article and the [salary study document](#) on pensions.org.

SYNOD OF LINCOLN TRAILS New Pastor Support Program

The New Pastor Support Program is open to any pastors in this synod newly ordained to service within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Regardless of the setting for the call: be it congregational, chaplaincy, community service or teaching, persons in their first three years of ordained service are invited to participate in the three year program which includes six three-day retreats and other one-day small group regional gatherings.

Our purpose is to support newly ordained pastors as they grow in leadership capacity, to build community and friendships and enjoy daily worship, prayer, and renewal. The three or four leaders of each three-year cohort are experienced pastors and church leaders from among the eight presbyteries in Illinois and Indiana, including a member of the synod staff. Retreats are held at Presbyterian camps or conference centers in this synod. Content offered at each retreat is developed in response to the particular needs and experiences of that cohort. New groups are started at least biennially.

If you are interested in participating or would like to refer another to the program, please contact Judy Lucas in the synod office at judy@lincolntrails.org or call 317/923-3681.

Please keep Rev. Peggy McDonald's family in your prayers. Rev. McDonald passed away August 25, 2017. She served on the staff of the Synod of Lincoln Trails and was currently leading New Pastor Groups.

MARION MEDICAL MISSION (MMM) Celebrates its 27th Year of Installing Wells

Marion Medical Mission (MMM) is now in its 27th year of installing wells. It is the largest church related employer in the southern part of PSEI. Since 1990, Marion Medical Mission has built over 30,000 wells, covering an area of roughly 57,000 square miles in Malawi, Zambia, and Tanzania. These wells provide an estimated 4 million to the extreme rural poor (2.4 million children) with a sustainable source of safe drinking water.

In 2016, American volunteers and African villagers built 2,732 wells in remote rural villages in Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia in a 14-week period beginning September 1, providing an estimated 409,800 people (including 245,880 children) with a source of safe drinking water that they can afford to maintain.

MMM's 2017 goal is to build 2,800 wells. Last month, 37 U.S. volunteers (including two from the Presbytery of Southeastern Illinois, in addition to Tom and Jocelyn Logan) will travel to Africa for this year's well season.

MMM builds a well for \$400, far below what it costs other organizations to build the same well. Villagers make the brick, gather the clay, stone and sand, and provide the unskilled labor. MMM provides only what the villagers cannot – the cement, pipe, pump, and skilled African labor. 100% of all designated donations go to their designated purposes. 100% of all undesignated donations go to the mission field in Africa.

Churches in the Presbytery of Southeastern Illinois have been faithful supporters of Marion Medical Mission, and they continue to need your support as they begin a new season of well building. Pray for the volunteers, the African staff, and the villages – and when you pray, move your feet. Help tell this extraordinary story. Contribute money to fund wells. You are needed, you are important, and you make a difference.

In Search of Financial Wellness

Are you one of those people who worries daily about your budget and personal finances? Or, do you feel confident that your current and future financial well-being are under control?

How you feel may not be an accurate predictor of your actual financial position. In its report [*What it means to be Financially Well*](#) (Spring 2017), Fidelity Investments, record keeper for the Retirement Savings Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (RSP), notes "Doing well financially – e.g., maintaining a budget, saving enough for retirement, investing appropriately – is no guarantee of feeling good about one's finances, nor is feeling good a guarantee of financial success ... nearly 1 in 10 people who can't come up with \$2,000 in an emergency are very confident in their financial situation."

Fidelity offers many resources to help you make progress in your personal search for financial well-being and understand where your money is actually going. Read [50/15/5: a saving and spending rule of thumb](#), and take the [Savings and spending check-up](#).

If you participate in the RSP, check out these additional resources:

- **Fidelity's Planning & Guidance Center.** Log on to **NetBenefits** (fidelity.com/atwork) and select **Planning** at the top of the page; then click **Plan for Retirement** to access the Planning & Guidance Center.
- **Professional guidance.** Reach out to a Fidelity Workplace Planning and Guidance Consultant, available to all RSP participants by calling 800-642-7131 to schedule a free, confidential telephone consultation (mention plan #57887).
- **Target date lifecycle funds.** Target date funds, such as the RSP Freedom Funds, can make investing easier with a single-fund option for your long-term retirement savings. Read more at [Fidelity Freedom Funds](#).
- **Fidelity Portfolio Advisory Service at Work (PAS-W).** If your financial situation is somewhat complex, or you seek an investment strategy tailored to your specific situation and risk tolerance, Fidelity's fee-based managed account service, PAS-W, may be an appropriate alternative.

If you still have questions, call Fidelity at 800-343-0860 (mention plan #57887) or call the Board at 800-773-7752 (800-PRESPLAN) and speak with a service representative.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

pda@pcusa.org ~ 800-728-7228, X5839 ~ 100 Witherspoon St., Louisville, KY 40202

GIVE - Share your financial blessings to help disaster survivors throughout the world.

ACT - Get involved with Disaster Recovery Ministry.

PRAY - Our best response is prayer. Seek God's presence on behalf of disaster survivors.

HOW WE WORK Presbyterian Disaster Assistance enables congregations and mission partners of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to witness to the healing love of Christ through caring for communities adversely affected by crises and catastrophic events.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is the emergency and refugee program of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. The core budget, including staff and administrative costs, is funded through the One Great Hour of Sharing, and its program work is additionally funded through designated gifts.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

- Focuses on the long term recovery of disaster impacted communities.
- Provides training and disaster preparedness for presbyteries and synods.
- Works collaboratively with church partners and members of the ACT Alliance (Action by Churches Together) internationally, and nationally with other faith based responders.
- Connects partners locally and internationally with key organizations active in the response — United Nations, NVOAD (National Voluntary Agencies Active in Disaster), World Food Program, Red Cross, FEMA and others.

First Presbyterian of Murphysboro Community Garden and Labyrinth Update

By Sam Foskey, Temporary Supply Pastor

When I began serving First Presbyterian of Murphysboro in 2016, I discovered that their Outreach Committee wanted to start a community garden and put in a labyrinth as part of a holistic health program. At that point, some general plans had been made for both but nothing concrete had been done.

Then the committee decided to apply for a Mission and Ministry Grant from the Presbytery. We worked on the application and sent it in for consideration in May of last year. In short order, we were awarded a nice grant of \$2500. After that, work on the two projects took off in earnest.

We first began on the labyrinth. That work has gone a little slower than work on the garden because we have spent a lot of time figuring out what we want to do. We invited a local labyrinth designer to meet with us and he made some good suggestions. We spent some time reading about various labyrinth designs. Recently, the committee met and walked the labyrinth at St. Joseph's Hospital in Murphysboro.

This is what we have accomplished so far: we used yellow tape to make an outline of the labyrinth on a nice grassy area behind the church. In the center of the area that will be the labyrinth is a small tree. A bench has been installed around the tree.

We want to put in a brick labyrinth. We have gathered the bricks but are trying to decide whether to dig a small trench along the outline of the proposed labyrinth and lay them flush with the surface of the ground or raise the bricks a little above the surface. We are killing the grass inside the labyrinth by covering it with sheets of dark plastic.

Regarding the community garden, we began publicizing our intent to create such a garden in February 2017, using the usual methods (social media, flyers, newspaper announcements, word of mouth, and so forth). We also began working with the Jackson County Extension Service and some experienced gardeners in the area. At our first meeting, a horticulturist from the Extension Service gave a presentation. Afterwards, we signed up those present who were interested in participating in a community garden and began to make our plans. The group met frequently over the next few weeks and assigned garden plots and made assignments.

Fast forward to July, 2017. A small but dedicated group of church volunteers and community members is now tending a thriving garden. They don't meet often but talk on the phone and sometimes meet at the garden while working. It is a very "organic" process, as is the garden itself! They informally decide who is going to water, to attempt insect eradication, and other tasks. The garden looks great now. There is a veritable bumper crop of tomatoes, plus a few squash, peppers, and climbing beans. Some produce has already been given to the Murphysboro Food Pantry.

Thank you, Mission and Ministry Team, for the very helpful financial grant. And thank you, Presbytery of Southern Illinois, for having the vision to make these funds available. All the glory goes to God.

Pasted below are some pictures of the garden and one picture of the labyrinth in preparation. You can see the bench and the plastic that is being used to kill the grass, plus a few of the bricks.

Sincerely,

Sam "I Have a Black Thumb" Foskey

Temporary Supply Pastor, First Presbyterian of Murphysboro and First United Presbyterian of Pinckneyville



Photos from August 24th Stated Meeting at Greenville, First



Photos by Michael Evanchak, Taylorville, First