

# What is a General Assembly?



It is the one place where the whole church gathers. Commissioners and youth from every presbytery are in attendance. Representative students from the seminaries, ecumenical partners from all over the world, and mission co-workers participate as advisory delegates. Thousands more gather as observers or supporters.

They are there to worship, and also to do business. Ideas which may have begun at local churches' session meetings pass through presbyteries to become Assembly business as overtures. There are Moderators to elect and mission initiatives to form. The larger church can adopt statements which speak to the church, and sometimes to those outside the church, about issues of theology, justice, and peacemaking. Everyone's voice is valued, every part of the church is brought into the light of the Spirit, and together the people seek to discern the will of Christ.

Although many PC(USA) ministries are eventually supported through other funding streams, all ministries undertaken in the name of the denomination grow out of decisions made by the General Assembly. When you read stories of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance out in the field or pick up a Glory to God hymnal, you are experiencing the work of an Assembly. When pastors are trained and ruling elders study the Book of Order, they are resourced by the work of an Assembly. When a mission co-worker enters a new field or a Young Adult Volunteer holds the hand of a hungry child, they are continuing the work of an Assembly.

This is the General Assembly. This is your per capita at work.



**Tom Hay**

*Tom Hay has recently retired after serving for ten years as Director of Assembly Operations.*

## Per Capita

Per capita is an annual per member apportionment assessed by the General Assembly (*Book of Order*, G-3.0106), and by many synods and presbyteries, to enable Presbyterians mutually and equitably to share the ecclesiastical and administrative costs of sustaining our witness to Christ through the Presbyterian Church (USA). In 2020, the General Assembly portion of per capita is \$8.95.



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and how it is assessed and allocated in this presbytery,



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