

Per Capita



Presbyterian Church (USA)  
Office of the General Assembly  
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**Question?** Please refer to <http://oga.pcusa.org/section/departments/per-capita>

# GIVING

## Per Capita

### WHAT IS 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).

**As one expression of commitment to God and to the larger faith community, congregations of all sizes are called to participate.** In 2020, the amount requested from each member of a Presbyterian congregation for ministry at the General Assembly level is \$8.95.

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### HOW DID PER CAPITA GET STARTED?

The earliest Presbyterian General Assemblies in the U.S. met annually, always in Philadelphia. As the church expanded into far-off places like Ohio, Kentucky, and Missouri, attendance at the Assembly became prohibitively expensive to frontier commissioners.

In order to share the costs of bringing the whole church together, in 1806 the Assembly began development of a “Commissioner Travel Expense Fund.” Over the years this came to be known as per capita.

### WHERE DOES THE GA PORTION OF MY PER CAPITA CONTRIBUTION GO?

Through your per capita contributions, which provide almost the entire budget of the Office of the General Assembly, you enable many faithful ministries, including:

- ✦ Discerning God’s will together as a denomination
  - Through biennial General Assemblies (GA) — covering expenses for commissioners and advisory delegates, the venue, technology, training of leaders, the exhibit hall, and more
  - Through special committees established by a GA to dig deeply into issues of particular concern to the church, and through standing committees providing guidance for ongoing work
- ✦ Training church leaders — for sessions, congregations, and mid councils through events and the new “Equip PC(USA)” online platform
- ✦ Engaging with those studying and preparing for ministry
  - Through ordination exams and connections with seminaries
  - Through support for Certified Christian Educators
- ✦ Supporting the call processes of churches through the Church Leadership Connection online portal and personal consultations



- ✦ Building connections with local councils
  - Through the travel and presence of the GA Co-Moderators, the Stated Clerk, and OGA staff
  - Through various communications
- ✦ Engaging local communities as neighbors through the “Hands and Feet” initiative — including the “End Cash Bail” campaign and work happening now in Baltimore prior to the 224th GA in summer 2020
- ✦ Preserving and maintaining our history through the Presbyterian Historical Society, which can preserve the minutes and other history of your congregation, along with other records of the PC(USA)
- ✦ Attending to the covenant life of the PC(USA)
  - By editing and publishing of the Book of Order every two years
  - By interpreting the Book of Order and supporting judicial process for discipline and restoration
  - By supporting and holding accountable all work of representation and inclusion to help the church more clearly reflect Christ’s Beloved Community
  - By supporting Korean-speaking councils
  - By collecting and tracking statistics about the PC(USA)
- ✦ Engaging in issues of justice through immigration advocacy and legal support, including helping church workers from abroad obtain the appropriate visas
- ✦ Supporting and engaging in ecumenical and interreligious witness and relationships locally and worldwide



Some expenses of the Presbyterian Mission Agency are also funded by per capita, including the Office of the Executive Director, the PMA Board, communications, and advisory and advocacy committees.