



## Per Capita

### The Presbyterian Covenant Community Fund

#### What is per capita?

*Per capita* funding is how Presbyterians mutually share the costs of coming together to discern the Spirit's leading for the future.

It is how Presbyterians are trained to become better elders and ministers.

It is how Presbyterians discern God's call in their lives.

It is how Presbyterians participate in the life of the wider church by serving on GA committees and commissions.

It is how Presbyterians participate in the life of the Church universal as we commit ourselves to work and live in fellowship with "all persons in every nation" (*Book of Order*, G-4.0101)

The Westminster Confession says, "all believers, are therefore, under obligation to sustain the ordinances of the Christian religion where they are already established, and to contribute by their prayers, gifts, and personal efforts to the extension of the Kingdom of God throughout the whole earth" (6.058).

Per capita is a fundamental way in which all of the nearly 11,000 congregations and governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are connected and participate in the work of the wider church.

Because it is rooted in the connectional and covenantal nature of the Presbyterian church, as affirmed by the ordination vows taken by elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament, per capita could be called the Presbyterian Covenant Community Fund.



## Why is per capita important?

*Per capita brings Presbyterians together — literally!*

Presbyterians are connected in many ways, including our church government. We believe we discern best what God is calling us to do when we gather as governing bodies, "seek[ing] together to find and represent the will of Christ" (*Book of Order* G-4.0301). Per capita dollars pay for the costs of holding a General Assembly — including paying for the travel, room and board of commissioners and advisory delegates, several of whom would not be able to afford these expenses on their own.

*Per capita makes it possible for Presbyterians to govern ourselves the way we do.*

Presbyterians have a form of government built upon shared power and mutual accountability as we seek together to find and represent the will of Christ. By providing the primary means through which commissioners and advisory delegates can gather to do their work, per capita dollars help to undergird our governance system. Our Constitution provides a moral and theological compass that builds community and calls us to Christian faithfulness in gratitude to God.

*Per capita makes possible our effort for visible unity of the church of Jesus Christ.*

The PC(USA), as with other faith traditions and denominations, is but a small part of the one church of Jesus Christ. We affirm that God's call is for the church to be one.

*Per capita makes it possible for us to maintain our historical awareness.*

Our historical heritage helps us make informed decisions for the future. The Presbyterian Historical Society is our national archives and historical research center. It collects, preserves and shares the history of the American Presbyterian and Reformed tradition.