

Support for the Wider Church

Where does the money go?

Every congregation is asked to support the ministry of the whole church—General Assembly, Synod, and Presbytery—by making and fulfilling a pledge for our wider Church’s mission. **General Assembly mission and program dollars support ministries throughout this country and the world**—from funds for missionaries, to new church development grants. The General Assembly provides support services to presbyteries and congregations for pastoral search processes, Christian education resources, stewardship materials, and social justice endeavors. For more information about the work of the General Assembly check online at www.pcusa.org. **The Synod of the Covenant has four priorities at present: church development, racial ethnic ministries, campus ministry, and networking** of individuals and congregations that carry out particular ministry projects. Continuing programs include the Mobile Health Fair and Covenant grants for new ministries. More information about our Synod can be found at www.synodofthecovenant.org. While the General Assembly and Synod serve our regional, national, and international mission projects and ministry needs, **the Presbytery of the Western Reserve focuses primarily on local ministry and service**. Our Presbytery serves 48 congregations, one new church development, 15 mission partners, the South Africa Mission Partnership and various peace and justice initiatives.

What does your Presbytery do?

The primary work of the Presbytery of the Western Reserve is to equip congregations to be Christ in and for the world. Services for congregations include assistance with pastoral search processes; lay and clergy leadership development opportunities; church building needs; and grants for churches reaching out to new populations. Our Leadership Development Ministry sponsors nationally known authors to speak to the Presbytery; Graham Standish was here in 2008, and Diana Butler Bass in 2009. We also work with individuals as they identify a call to pastoral ministry and prepare for ordination. Our staff includes a part-time Pastor to Clergy and Families to care for their spiritual and emotional needs.

Each year the Presbytery’s Just Reach Ministry identifies projects from churches and agencies seeking to address community needs. Some programs are church-initiated such as Bethany’s community meal or Glenville’s summer youth camp, while others in 2010 like North Coast Health Ministry will address health care concerns. For several years the Just Reach Ministry has chosen educational themes based on Matthew 25 – “Just as you did it to the least of these...” so this year they will continue lifting up health care and begin sharing information about criminal justice issues.

Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly budgets are supported through congregational giving, per capita, grants, and investment income. Congregational pledge payments are distributed based on a formula between the General Assembly (35%), Synod (5%), and Presbytery (60%) unless otherwise designated by the Session on its pledge form. *A Session may choose to designate a portion of its Wider Church Pledge to particular projects within the budgets of the GA, Synod, or Presbytery as long as those designations are within the appropriate percentage of the total for each governing body.* If congregations choose to support some specific projects over and beyond their basic commitment to the wider church’s mission and ministry, then they may send additional funds designated for “Extra Commitment Giving.”