

What is the purpose of per capita?

- Per capita is a set amount of money per member that Presbyterian Church(USA) congregations pay to the larger Presbyterian Church organization. Each Presbyterian shares in the advantages of being a member of Presbyterian Church (USA) so every Presbyterian is asked to share the expenses associated with the benefits our larger denomination.
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How has per capita evolved?

- The earliest Presbyterian General Assemblies in the US met annually, always in Philadelphia. As the church expanded into far off places, like Ohio, attendance at the Assembly became prohibitively expensive for the frontier commissioners. So, in 1806, to share the costs of bringing the whole church together, the Assembly began development of a “Commissioner Travel Expense Fund”, which later became known as the per capita. It was a way to spread the cost to help presbyterian churches stay connected.
 - That idea of the more established presbyterian churches helping newer churches who were just getting started, is also part of WPC’s history. In 1805, Worthington Presbyterian Church started with 11 members, meeting in various locations. The presbytery sent licensed ministers to preach and help organize the church. In 1826 Pastor Hulburd and one session member traveled for a month to reach the National Presbyterian Offices in Philadelphia to ask for financial help to build a church building. Four years later a modest, rectangular building with 3 windows and 2 doors was completed. That original building was incorporated into our current sanctuary, and expanded upon several times resulting in our current church building.
 - Today the per capita funds, which are shared at the local, regional and national levels, help our denomination function, provides support for congregations and keeps us connected so that we may further the mission of Jesus Christ around the world.
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Where does the money from the per capita offering go?

- Part of the money stays with our local presbytery, and the rest is split between the Synod where the presbytery is located, and the General Assembly. The amount is based on the budgets of those respective councils.
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What are some of the uses for the per capita funds and has WPC benefited in any way?

- Discerning God's will together as a denomination
 - This work is done through the biennial General Assembly. The General Assembly has expenses for commissioners and advisory delegates, the venue, technology, training of leaders, the exhibit hall and more.
 - Helping to fund special committees established by a General Assembly to dig deeply into issues of particular concern to the church and supplying financial support for standing committees which provide guidance for ongoing work.
 - Training church leaders for sessions, congregations and mid councils through various events and tools. (WPC pastors have attended the professionals retreat and will do so again in 2026.)
 - Engaging with those studying and preparing for ministry through ordination exams and connections with seminaries (Nick Robison is currently going through the process)
 - Providing specialized services and guidance when needed in the life of a church. (Funds received from Per Capita helped to provide the services of the Lombard Peace Center to assist the membership of WPC. Training was also provided to the Pastor Nominating Committee.)
 - Offering the online portal that supports the call process for pastors and congregations. (WPC used this tool which resulted in calling Pastor Matt Reeves.)
 - Experimenting with new ways to be church and live out our faith.
 - Funding helps to support A Light to the Nations, the monthly service held in WPC's Chapel which is run by Peter Okyere, WPC's Pastor in Charge of Immigrants and Refugees.
 - Grants have been given to Jacob's Porch, a ministry specifically for college students at OSU, where our own Taylor Barner is a minister on staff.
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How much will WPC be paying for this year's per capita?

- Each of the 3 councils have budgeted the following amounts to be received from each active member of the congregation:
 - \$11.26 General Assembly (25%)
 - \$3.40 Synod of the Covenant (7%)
 - \$31.34 Presbytery of Scioto Valley (68% or, approximately 2/3rd's of the total)
 - For a total of \$46.00 per active member
 - Worthington Presbyterian Church's per capita commitment for 2026 is \$41,400 and this is being paid on a monthly basis throughout the year.
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Why is there a special offering each year to offset the expense of the per capita commitment?

- Since this is a per member apportionment paid to receive the benefits of a larger, connected denomination, local churches ask their individual members to pay this expense.

- This is a financial commitment where the funds are combined with efforts of all the other PCUSA churches. The local church does not control the annual per capita amount, nor where the funds are ultimately spent. It is a per member apportionment based on the budgets of our Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly, so in that way it is a special offering.
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How much did WPC members give last year in the special offering for per capita?

- Last year our members' per capita donation was \$11,700 which paid 29% of WPC's total per capita commitment for 2025.
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Why are we trying to do a better job explaining what the per capita is?

- If our members better understand how WPC and other congregations benefit from the per capita funds, then more members might make their per capita payment.
 - This year WPC has budgeted with the hope that members pay 57% of the church's total per capita commitment.
 - If we exceed that goal, then the excess funds be available to go toward the mission work of the church.
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How can we reach this goal?

- If you have never paid the per capita before, consider making this the year you begin that tradition.
 - If you have confirmed high school students or college students who are church members (they are considered active members), you may consider paying their per capita amounts.
 - If you are already planning on paying your per capita amount, and you have the funds to do so, consider paying the per capita for those on a more limited budget.
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What should we remember?

- Per Capita is the fundamental way in which the members of 8,400 PCUSA congregations are connected to participate in the work of the wider church.
- WPC and its members have greatly benefited from this connection.
- Consider paying this year's per capita of \$46 per member and if you are able, make an additional payment to help those who may be challenged to make their payment.