



Family Connections

Find time to explore these questions as a family after each session.

Session 1

- How did the Presbyterian Church get started?
- What do you know about the Protestant Reformation?
- How does the history of the Presbyterian Church connect with the history of the United States?
- How are Presbyterians similar to other Christian churches? How are Presbyterians unique?

Session 2

- Why are we called *Presbyterians*?
- How is your congregation similar to and different from other Christian congregations in your community?
- How is your congregation similar to and different from other Presbyterian churches in your community?
- How do various Christian denominations relate to their names? (Examples: Methodists, Baptists, Lutherans)
- How does the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) connect to its name?

Session 3

- How is worship in a Presbyterian church different from other churches?
- What part of your congregation's regular worship services do you most resonate with? What part of your congregation's regular worship services do you least resonate with?
- If you have been to worship in a non-Presbyterian church, how was the worship experience similar to or different from your congregation's regular worship services?
- If you have been to worship in other Presbyterian churches or at Presbyterian-related events, how was the worship similar to or different from your congregation's regular worship services?

Session 4

- What do Presbyterians believe about God?
- What beliefs do all people of faith hold in common?
- What beliefs do all Christians hold in common?
- What beliefs make Presbyterians unique?

Session 5

- What do Presbyterians believe about the people of God?
- What is God's relationship with humanity?
- Does God have a different relationship with Christians compared to non-Christians? Why or why not?
- What do Presbyterians believe about the role of humanity in God's world?

Session 6

- What do Presbyterians do?
- As Reformed Christians, what priorities do Presbyterians have in their various ministries?
- How do the priorities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) compare to the priorities of other Christian denominations?
- How is your congregation at work in the world?



CREATING YOUR OWN PC(USA) SEAL.

1. Using the ideas found below or your own idea, decide how your group can best create an image of the seal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The seal should be as large as possible for your meeting space.
2. Using a permanent marker, draw or trace an outline of the entire seal (found on the next page) on the background of your choice. You can trace an enlarged copy of the seal onto the background, or you can trace a projected version of the image (using an LCD or overhead projector) onto the background.
3. After each session, fill in a specific area of the seal as directed.

Decoupage

Background: Thin piece of wood primed with white paint or thick sheet of foam board

Seal: Images of people or nature cut from magazines or various colors of tissue paper

Instructions: Fill in the areas of the seal by gluing the magazine images or tissue paper to the background. When completed, paint over the glued materials with art-project sealant or watered-down glue.

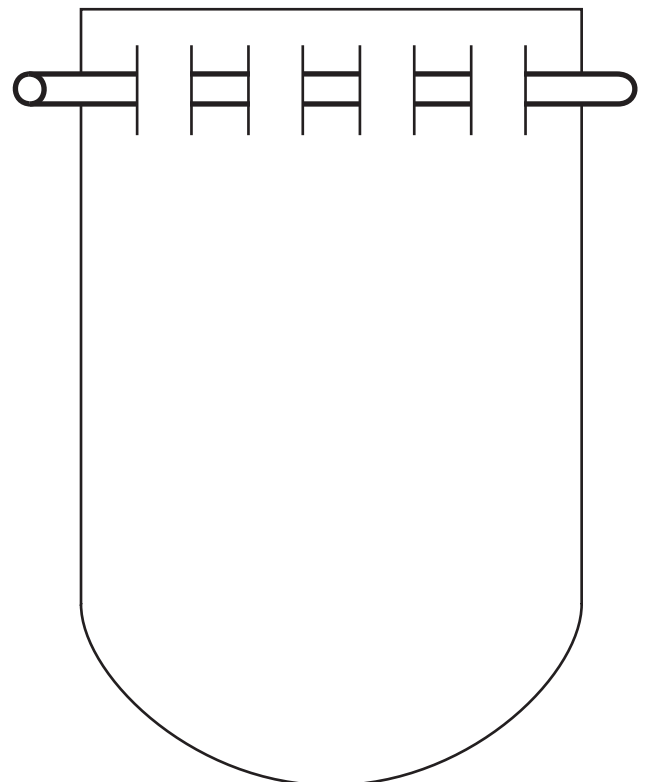
Felt Banner

Background: Large piece of felt

Seal: Smaller pieces of felt in contrasting colors.

Consider outlining the various areas with cord and accenting with beads or sequins.

Instructions: Attach felt and accessories using craft glue or hot glue. Two inches from the top of the banner, cut a row of 2-inch vertical lines with 6 inches between each cut. Consider rounding out the bottom of the banner to give it some shape. Feed a 1" dowel through the slits cut at the top of the felt. (See example.)

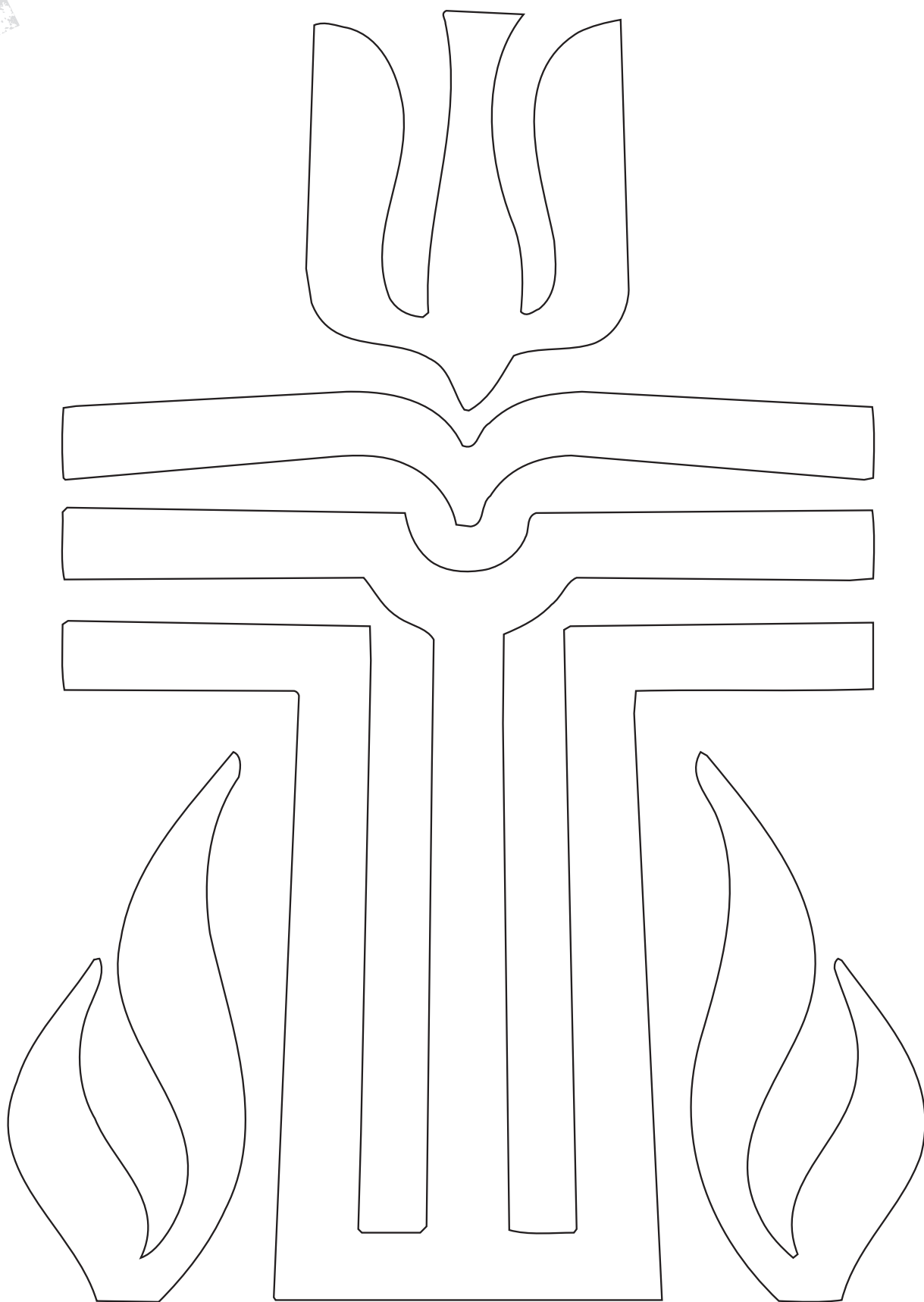


Wall of the Church Building

Background: Drywall or plaster wall

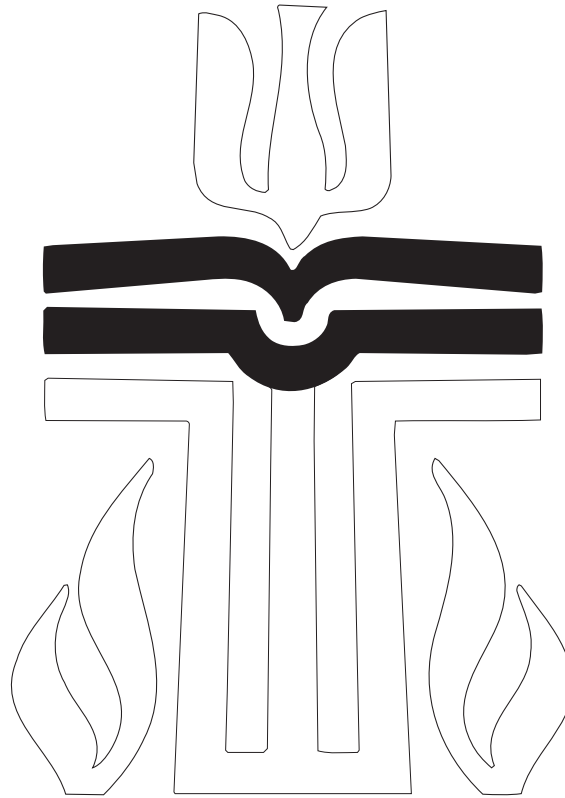
Seal: Latex paint

Instructions: Find a location in your church building where the seal would look nice. Since this will be a lasting image, carefully consider color choice. On a white wall, the cross could be blue and the flames could be red. On a dark wall, consider making the cross gold and the flames red.





THE SEAL OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)



Session 1: Bible

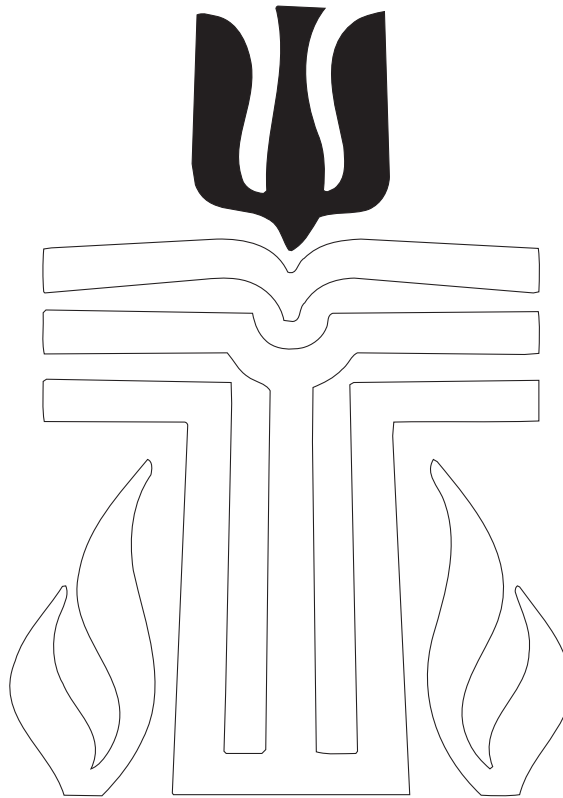
The symbol of the Bible is central in our seal, because the Bible is of central importance to how Presbyterians relate to God. Scripture is our means of knowing God's word. The characters and stories of Scripture teach us about ourselves and our relationship with God. The values of Scripture teach us how to live according to God's will. The good news of Scripture teaches us that God loves us and is always with us, and that the hope of a peaceful world is real!

Discussion Questions

- Why does the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have a Bible on its seal?
- In what ways does your congregation value Scripture?
- In what ways do you value Scripture?



THE SEAL OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)



Session 2: Dove

In the seal, the upper part of the cross is the shape of a descending dove. As a symbol of the Holy Spirit, the dove is closely tied to the representation of the Bible, affirming the role of the Spirit in both inspiring and interpreting Scripture in the life of the church. The dove also symbolizes Christ's baptism by John and the peace and wholeness that his death and resurrection bring to a broken world.¹ This dove, heading downward, reminds us of "the Spirit of God descending like a dove" at Jesus' baptism (Matthew 3:16). The Spirit calls people, and the church, to do God's will, and inspires them to fulfill that call.

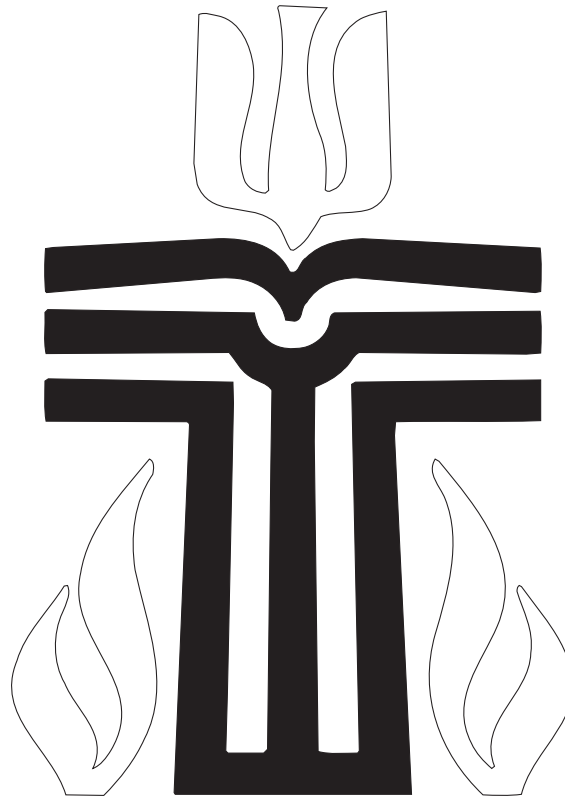
Discussion Questions

- Why does the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have a dove on its seal?
- What can the image of a dove represent in our culture?
- What Bible stories involve doves? What do the doves represent in the stories?

1. Adapted from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Office of the General Assembly, *The Seal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, pcusa.org/oga/seal.htm.



THE SEAL OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)



Session 3: Lectern

The symbol of a lectern is included in the seal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) because worship in our denomination depends on Scripture. In the seal the lectern is immediately below the Bible, underscoring the importance of the Word of God. The earliest worship services would include a “lesson” (1 Corinthians 14:26) from the Hebrew Scriptures, which typically meant reading a passage and expressing an opinion about it.¹ Our denomination similarly requires that a worship service include a lesson through the reading and proclamation of the Word.²

Discussion Questions

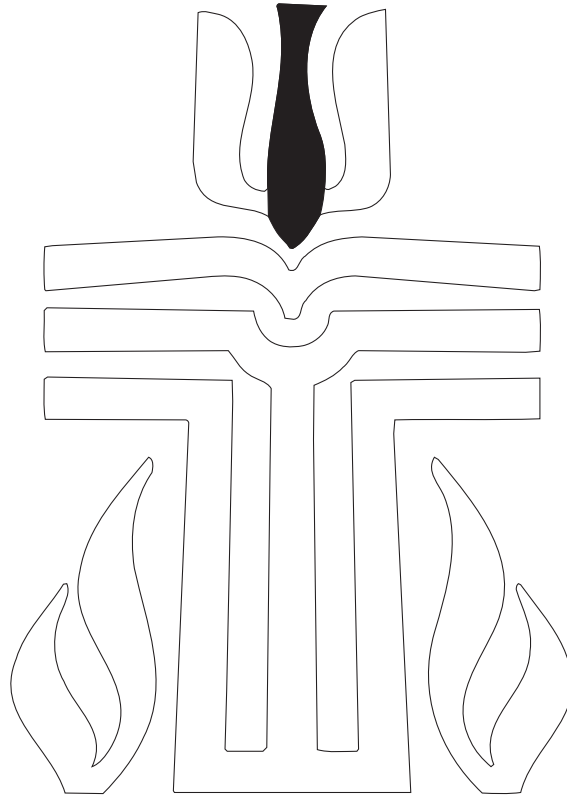
- Why does the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have a lectern on its seal?
- How does your congregation engage Scripture in worship?
- What are some other ways you might engage and experience Scripture?
- How does reading Scripture build up your congregation’s sense of community?

1. James F. White, *A Brief History of Christian Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), p. 35.

2. *Book of Order* (Louisville: Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 2007), W-2.2001.



THE SEAL OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)



Session 4: Fish

The fish has been a Christian symbol for as long as the church has existed. The Greek word for fish, *ichthus*, is actually an acronym for Jesus (*Iesous*) Christ (*Christos*), Son (*Uios*) of God (*Theou*), Savior (*Soter*).¹ Presbyterians use this symbol as a way to express our connection to the earliest Christians.

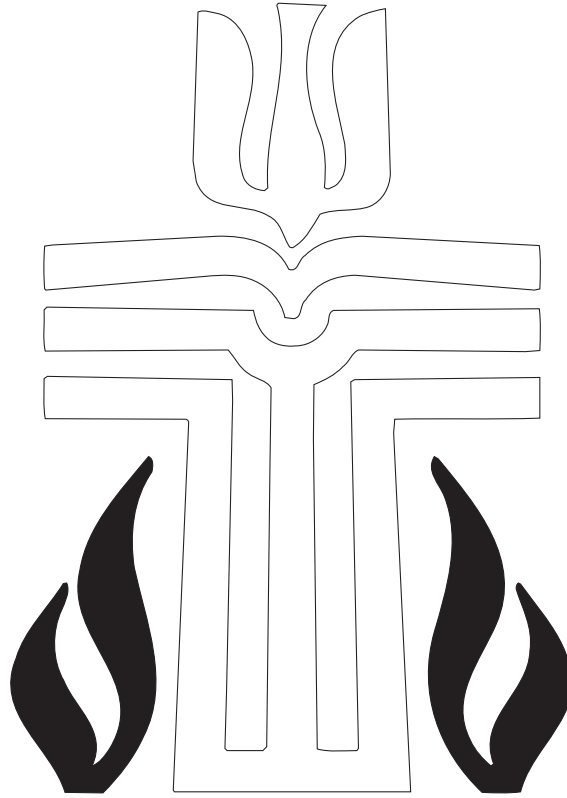
Discussion Questions

- What does the symbol of a fish mean to Christians?
- Why does the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have a fish on its seal?
- What stories with fish are there in the Bible? What do fish represent or signify in each story?

1. Gregory Dill, "The History of the Ichthus," www.plymouth-church.com/ichthus.html.



THE SEAL OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)



Session 5: Flames

The flames in the lower part of the seal form an implied triangle, a traditional symbol of the Trinity. The flames themselves symbolize elements of the Old and New Testaments: the burning bush that God spoke to Moses from and the beginning of the Christian church when Christ manifested himself to his apostles at Pentecost.¹

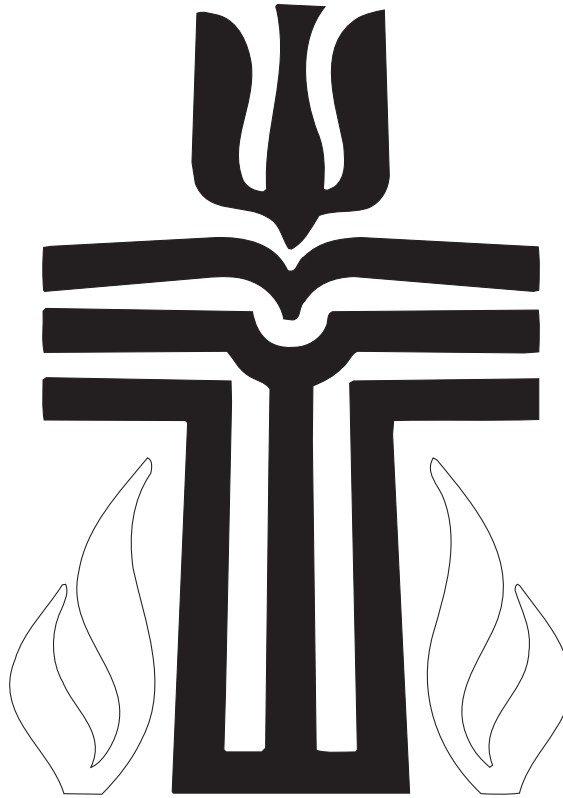
Discussion Questions

- What do the flames mean to Christians?
- What stories with flames are there in the Bible?
- Why does the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have flames on its seal?

1. Adapted from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Office of the General Assembly, *The Seal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, pcusa.org/oga/seal.htm.



THE SEAL OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)



Session 6: Cross

In terms of both design and theology, the most dominant element of the seal is the cross—the universal symbol of the Christian church. The cross represents the love of God manifested in Jesus Christ and his passion and resurrection. Because of its association with Presbyterian history, the Celtic cross was chosen as the model for the seal.¹

Discussion Questions

- Why is the cross the predominant image in the seal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?
- What does the symbol of the cross mean to you and your faith?
- Is the symbol of the cross the best image to have as the predominant image in the seal of the PC(USA)? Why or why not?

1. Adapted from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Office of the General Assembly, *The Seal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, pcusa.org/oga/seal.htm.

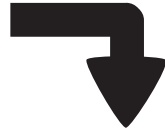


REFORMATION BASICS

Early Reformation

The Problem

Martin Luther was a priest and theology professor who lived in Germany in the 1500s. He was conflicted over some of the church's theology and practices of the time, especially the selling of indulgences (allowing people to purchase forgiveness).



The Protest

On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther protested the problems in the church by nailing to the church door in Wittenberg, Germany, a list of 95 Theses (ideas) of reforms he thought needed to happen in the church. His protest came after years of studying and prayerful reflection.



Justified!

A significant part of Luther's reform had to do with justification: In his protest, Luther claimed that there's nothing we can do to be justified, or be made right with God. Instead, we are justified by God's grace that is freely given to us.



Calvin and Beyond

John Calvin

Born in France in 1509, John Calvin continued the theological ideas set forth by Martin Luther. In his twenties Calvin fled to Switzerland to avoid persecution for publicly stating his Reformed convictions and wrote the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Calvin's form of Protestantism, which spread across Europe and eventually to the American colonies, formed the seeds of the Presbyterian Church.



The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Beginning in the 1600s, various communities of Presbyterians existed in the American colonies. Since then, the Presbyterian Church has split and reconnected in different ways. Our current denomination, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is a result of the 1983 merger reuniting the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and the Presbyterian Church in the United States.





EPHESIANS 2:4–10

NRSV

But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

TNIV

But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

King James Version

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,
Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:
That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.
For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:
Not of works, lest any man should boast.
For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

The Message

Instead, immense in mercy and with an incredible love, he embraced us. He took our sin-dead lives and made us alive in Christ. He did all this on his own, with no help from us! Then he picked us up and set us down in highest heaven in company with Jesus, our Messiah. Now God has us where he wants us, with all the time in this world and the next to shower grace and kindness upon us in Christ Jesus. Saving is all his idea, and all his work. All we do is trust him enough to let him do it. It’s God’s gift from start to finish! We don’t play the major role. If we did, we’d probably go around bragging that we’d done the whole thing! No, we neither make nor save ourselves. God does both the making and saving. He creates each of us by Christ Jesus to join him in the work he does, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, work we had better be doing.



BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS

Bible Study

Using your assigned Scripture passage, follow the instructions below.

Scripture:

Ephesians 2:4–10

Romans 4:13–25

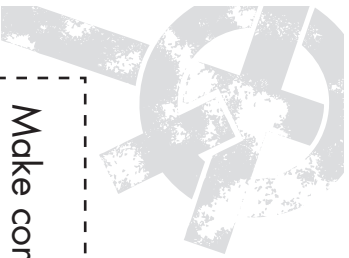
Romans 5:1–11

Summarize this Scripture passage in as few words as possible.

Respond to the following questions:

- What does this Scripture passage tell us about God? about Jesus Christ? about our relationship with the triune God?
- How is this Scripture passage contrary to the practice of selling indulgences that Martin Luther experienced in the 1500s?
- How does this Scripture passage connect with Reformed theology?

CHAOTIC MEETING INSTRUCTIONS



✂

Make comments that indicate that you are not listening to what anyone else is saying.

Try to ask a question after each person speaks. The questions should attempt to clarify what the speaker just said.

Ask “process questions” as often as possible. (Examples: “Is this a good time for me to ask a question?” or “Can we vote on this now?”)

Make statements and ask questions that indicate the opposite of whatever is being discussed.

Ask the following questions as often as possible: “Why are we even discussing this issue? Why can’t one of us just make a decision so we can be done and go home?”

Never wait to be recognized before making a statement or asking a question—just interrupt the conversation!

✂
React strongly with positive (yea!) or negative (boo!) comments as often as possible!

Have a side conversation with someone next to you as often as possible throughout the meeting.

Try to change the subject of the meeting by continually raising your hand and, when called on, ask that the group start talking about a different issue that is important to you.



HISTORIC PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH ORDER

From the *Book of Order*:

G-1.0300: The Historic Principles of Church Order

In setting forth the following form of government, worship, and discipline, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reaffirms the historic principles of Church order which have been a part of our common heritage in this nation and which are basic to our Presbyterian concept and system of church government, namely:

G-1.0301: Right of Judgment

- (a) That “God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of [humans] which are in anything contrary to [God’s] Word, or beside it, in matters of faith or worship.”
- (b) Therefore we consider the rights of private judgment, in all matters that respect religion, as universal and unalienable: We do not even wish to see any religious constitution aided by the civil power, further than may be necessary for protection and security, and at the same time, be equal and common to all others.

G-1.0302: Corporate Judgment

That, in perfect consistency with the above principle of common right, every Christian Church, or union or association of particular churches, is entitled to declare the terms of admission into its communion, and the qualifications of its ministers and members, as well as the whole system of its internal government which Christ hath appointed; that in the exercise of this right they may, notwithstanding, err, in making the terms of communion either too lax or too narrow; yet, even in this case, they do not infringe upon the liberty or the rights of others, but only make an improper use of their own.

G-1.0303: Officers

That our blessed Savior, for the edification of the visible Church, which is his body, hath appointed officers, not only to preach the gospel and administer the Sacraments, but also to exercise discipline, for the preservation of both truth and duty; and that it is incumbent upon these officers, and upon the whole Church, in whose name they act, to censure or cast out the erroneous and scandalous, observing, in all cases, the rules contained in the Word of God.

G-1.0304: Truth and Goodness

That truth is in order to goodness; and the great touchstone of truth, its tendency to promote holiness, according to our Savior’s rule, “By their fruits ye shall know them.” And that no opinion can be either more pernicious or more absurd than that which brings truth and falsehood upon a level,

and represents it as of no consequence what a man’s opinions are. On the contrary, we are persuaded that there is an inseparable connection between faith and practice, truth and duty. Otherwise, it would be of no consequence either to discover truth or to embrace it.

G-1.0305: Differences of Views

That, while under the conviction of the above principle we think it necessary to make effectual provision that all who are admitted as teachers be sound in the faith, we also believe that there are truths and forms with respect to which [people] of good characters and principles may differ. And in all these we think it the duty both of private Christians and societies to exercise mutual forbearance toward each other.

G-1.0306: Election by the People

That though the character, qualifications, and authority of Church officers are laid down in the Holy Scriptures, as well as the proper method of their investiture and institution, yet the election of the persons to the exercise of this authority, in any particular society, is in that society.

G-1.0307: Church Power

That all Church power, whether exercised by the body in general or in the way of representation by delegated authority, is only ministerial and declarative; that is to say, that the Holy Scriptures are the only rule of faith and manners; that no Church governing body ought to pretend to make laws to bind the conscience in virtue of their own authority; and that all their decisions should be founded upon the revealed will of God. Now though it will easily be admitted that all synods and councils may err, through the frailty inseparable from humanity, yet there is much greater danger from the usurped claim of making laws than from the right of judging upon laws already made, and common to all who profess the gospel, although this right, as necessity requires in the present state, be lodged with fallible [people].

G-1.0308: Church Discipline

Lastly, that if the preceding scriptural and rational principles be steadfastly adhered to, the vigor and strictness of its discipline will contribute to the glory and happiness of any church. Since ecclesiastical discipline must be purely moral or spiritual in its object, and not attended with any civil effects, it can derive no force whatever but from its own justice, the approbation of an impartial public, and the countenance and blessing of the great Head of the Church universal.¹

1. *Book of Order* (Louisville: the Office of the General Assembly, 2007), G-1.0300–G-1.0308.



MARKS OF PRESBYTERIAN POLITY

The Presbyterian Church is named after its polity (form of government). The word *Presbyterian* comes from the Greek word *presbuteros*, which means “elder.” Here are a few aspects of Presbyterian polity that work together to make Presbyterian churches unique among Christian churches:

- **Connectedness**—The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a connectional church where congregations come together to form presbyteries, presbyteries join together in synods, and synods unite in the General Assembly. The various levels of government serve different functions. Presbyterians listen to one another when making decisions, seeking guidance from the Holy Spirit, the Bible, the church’s constitution, and one another.
- **Representative government**—Presbyterian polity is based on a representative style of government. Guided by the Holy Spirit, representatives at various levels of government (session, presbytery, synod, and General Assembly) vote according to their own consciences.
- **Commitment to being “decent and in order”**—Presbyterians believe that they can be most faithful when they are highly organized. For this reason, Presbyterians have a *Book of Order* that explains how the church is ordered, including processes for disagreement and discipline.
- **Diversity**—Presbyterians believe that decisions are best made when the entire community participates in the decision-making process. This includes listening to those who have different opinions and different backgrounds.¹

1. Adapted from Jack Rogers, “How Presbyterians Make Decisions,” *Presbyterians Today*, April 2003 (pcusa.org/today/believe/past/apr03/decisions.htm).



BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS

Isaiah 6:1–8
Psalm 150
Acts 2:41–47
1 Corinthians 14:26–33

Read your assigned Scripture passage and then respond to the following questions:

- In what ways does this Scripture passage connect with worship?
- Which section(s) of W-3.3101 from the *Book of Order* most connect(s) with this Scripture passage? Why?



ISAIAH 6:1–8

Roles: Narrator, Seraphs, Isaiah, God

Narrator: There once was a man named Isaiah, who had a vision about God. Or maybe it was a dream. At any rate, it happened in the year that King Uzziah died. Isaiah saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of the Lord's robe filled the temple. Seraphs—heavenly beings—were in attendance above him. Each seraph had six wings: The seraphs covered their faces with two of their wings, covered their feet with two of their wings, and flew with the other two wings. The seraphs called to each other and said . . .

Seraphs: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of God's glory!

Narrator: The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. And Isaiah said . . .

Isaiah: Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips. Yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!

Narrator: Then one of the seraphs flew to Isaiah, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. The seraph touched Isaiah's mouth with the live coal and said . . .

Seraph: Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed, and your sin is blotted out.

Narrator: Then Isaiah heard the voice of the Lord saying . . .

God: Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?

Narrator: And Isaiah said . . .

Isaiah: Here am I—send me!



FOUR-PART ORDER OF WORSHIP

Action	Scripture
1. Entering the place of worship with a sense of being in the presence of the holy.	
2. Realizing and acknowledging one's unworthiness, then receiving absolution.	
3. Hearing the Word of God.	
4. Responding by giving of oneself and going out to serve.	





HYMNAL SCAVENGER HUNT

Use *The Presbyterian Hymnal* to find the answers to the following questions:

Which creeds are included in the hymnal? _____

In what languages is the Lord's Prayer printed? _____

How many tunes to "Away in a Manger" are printed in the hymnal? _____

Looking at hymn no. 123,

- What is the name of the hymn? _____
- What is the common name of the tune? _____
- Who wrote the words to the fourth verse? _____
- From what Scripture does the text come? _____
- What do all the numbers under the tune name mean? _____

How many indexes are there? _____

Which hymn by Jane Parker Huber uses text from Psalm 23? _____

How many African-American spirituals are there? _____

How many tunes are attributed to Handel? _____

Which hymn originated in Argentina? _____

Which hymn originated as a Confucian chant? _____

Which of the three hymns whose topic is the goodness of God has hymn text that is directed to God? _____

How many hymns can be sung to the meter 7.7.7.7 with alleluias? _____



HYMNAL SCAVENGER HUNT ANSWERS

Use *The Presbyterian Hymnal* to find the answers to the following questions:

Which creeds are included in the hymnal? Apostles' Creed and Nicene Creed

In what languages is the Lord's Prayer printed? English, Spanish, and Korean

How many tunes to "Away in a Manger" are printed in the hymnal? Two

Looking at hymn no. 123,

- What is the name of the hymn? "Jesus Christ Is Risen Today"
- What is the common name of the tune? Easter Hymn
- Who wrote the words to the fourth verse? Charles Wesley
- From what Scripture does the text come? 1 Corinthians 15:3-4
- What do all the numbers under the tune name mean? Meter—the number of beats found in each phrase of the hymn

How many indexes are there? Seven: 1. Authors, Translators, and Sources; 2. Composers, Arrangers, and Sources; 3. Scriptural Allusions; 4. Topical; 5. Metrical; 6. Alphabetical by Name; 7. First Lines and Common Titles

Which hymn by Jane Parker Huber uses text from Psalm 23? No. 174, "The Lord's My Shepherd"

How many African-American spirituals are there? Twenty-three; see the entry for "African-American spiritual" on page 682.

How many tunes are attributed to Handel? Six; see the entry for "Handel, George Frederick" on page 683.

Which hymn originated in Argentina? No. 432, "Canto de Esperanza/Song of Hope"; see entry for "Argentine folk melody" on page 682.

Which hymn originated as a Confucian chant? No. 480, "Praise Our God Above"; see entry for "Confucian chant" on page 682.

Which of the three hymns whose topic is the goodness of God has hymn text that is directed to God? No. 243, "We Thank You, Lord, for You Are Good"; see "God: Goodness" on page 694.

How many hymns can be sung to the meter 7.7.7.7 with alleluias? Four; see "7.7.7.7 with alleluias" on page 703.

Source: *The Presbyterian Hymnal* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990)





Totally Free



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Kind of Aware



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Kind of Disagree



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Totally Disagree



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PC(USA) QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How often do you generally attend worship in your congregation?

- Every week
- Nearly every week
- 2–3 times a month
- Once a month
- Several times a year
- About once or twice a year
- Less than once a year

2. How many hours during the last month have you given volunteer time at your church to teach, lead, serve on a committee, or help with some program or event?

More than 20	11–20	6–10
3–5	1–2	0

3. How often do you read the Bible privately?

- Daily or almost daily
- Several times a week
- Weekly
- Several times a month
- Once a month
- Less than once a month
- Never

4. How often do you pray privately?

- Daily or almost daily
- Several times a week
- Weekly
- Several times a month
- Once a month
- Less than once a month
- Never

5. How often do you say grace before meals?

- Daily or almost daily
- Several times a week
- Weekly
- Several times a month
- Once a month
- Less than once a month
- Never

6. How would you describe your *theological* views?

Very conservative	Conservative	
Moderate	Liberal	Very liberal

7. The Bible . . .

- Is the word of God, to be taken literally, word for word.
- Is the word of God, to be interpreted in the light of its historical and cultural context.
- Is the word of God, to be interpreted in the light of its historical context and the church's teachings.
- Is not the word of God, but contains God's word to us.
- Is not the word of God, but is a valuable book.

8. There is life beyond death.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure
Disagree	Strongly Disagree	

9. Jesus will return to earth someday.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure
Disagree	Strongly Disagree	

10. An individual should arrive at his or her religious beliefs independent of any church.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure
Disagree	Strongly Disagree	

11. All the different religions are equally good ways of helping a person find ultimate truth.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure
Disagree	Strongly Disagree	

12. Only followers of Jesus Christ can be saved.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure
Disagree	Strongly Disagree	

13. It is important to share my faith with other people.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure
Disagree	Strongly Disagree	

Source: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), "Religious and Demographic Profile of Presbyterians 2005"
(Louisville: Research Services, 2008), pcusa.org/research/panel/bkg-2006-2008-report.pdf





QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

1. How often do you generally attend worship in your congregation?

	Members	Elders
Every week	25%	36%
Nearly every week	40%	50%
2–3 times a month	15%	11%
Once a month	5%	1%
Several times a year	7%	1%
About once or twice a year	4%	<1%
Less than once a year	2%	0%

2. How many hours during the last month have you given volunteer time at your church to teach, lead, serve on a committee, or help with some program or event?

	Members	Elders
More than 20	2%	6%
11–20	4%	9%
6–10	11%	24%
3–5	21%	35%
1–2	24%	20%
0	38%	5%

3. How often do you read the Bible privately?

	Members	Elders	Pastors
Daily or almost daily	16%	20%	54%
Several times a week	16%	16%	36%
Weekly	11%	14%	8%
Several times a month	11%	15%	1%
Once a month	8%	10%	1%
Less than once a month	24%	19%	1%
Never	14%	7%	0%

4. How often do you pray privately?

	Members	Elders	Pastors
Daily or almost daily	67%	70%	87%
Several times a week	14%	16%	10%
Weekly	5%	4%	2%
Several times a month	7%	5%	1%
Once a month	2%	1%	<1%
Less than once a month	3%	2%	<1%
Never	2%	1%	0%



QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

5. How often do you say grace before meals?

	Members	Elders	Pastors
Daily or almost daily	47%	47%	81%
Several times a week	11%	14%	12%
Weekly	4%	5%	2%
Several times a month	10%	10%	3%
Once a month	5%	4%	1%
Less than once a month	16%	15%	1%
Never	6%	5%	<1%

6. How would you describe your *theological* views?

	Members	Elders	Pastors
Very conservative	6%	8%	6%
Conservative	35%	35%	28%
Moderate	40%	39%	38%
Liberal	14%	15%	23%
Very liberal	5%	4%	5%

7. The Bible . . .

	Members	Elders	Pastors
Is the word of God, to be taken literally, word for word.	18%	17%	5%
Is the word of God, to be interpreted in the light of its historical and cultural context.	38%	43%	56%
Is the word of God, to be interpreted in the light of its historical context and the church's teachings.	33%	32%	32%
Is not the word of God, but contains God's word to us.	8%	6%	7%
Is not the word of God, but is a valuable book.	2%	<1%	1%

8. There is life beyond death.

	Members	Elders	Pastors
Strongly Agree	66%	74%	85%
Agree	20%	18%	12%
Not Sure	13%	7%	2%
Disagree	1%	1%	<1%
Strongly Disagree	<1%	<1%	<1%

9. Jesus will return to earth someday.

	Members	Elders	Pastors
Strongly Agree	51%	58%	60%
Agree	18%	20%	20%
Not Sure	26%	19%	14%
Disagree	4%	3%	4%
Strongly Disagree	2%	1%	2%



QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

10. An individual should arrive at his or her religious beliefs independent of any church.

	Members	Elders	Pastors
Strongly Agree	15%	10%	2%
Agree	26%	21%	7%
Not Sure	21%	22%	8%
Disagree	28%	33%	50%
Strongly Disagree	10%	14%	33%

11. All the different religions are equally good ways of helping a person find ultimate truth.

	Members	Elders	Pastors
Strongly Agree	9%	5%	1%
Agree	23%	19%	6%
Not Sure	25%	23%	12%
Disagree	24%	29%	37%
Strongly Disagree	20%	24%	44%

12. Only followers of Jesus Christ can be saved.

	Members	Elders	Pastors
Strongly Agree	26%	28%	21%
Agree	15%	17%	16%
Not Sure	25%	23%	19%
Disagree	21%	20%	26%
Strongly Disagree	14%	11%	19%

13. It is important to share my faith with other people.

	Members	Elders	Pastors
Strongly Agree	33%	42%	66%
Agree	44%	48%	32%
Not Sure	18%	8%	1%
Disagree	4%	2%	<1%
Strongly Disagree	2%	<1%	<1%

Source: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), "Religious and Demographic Profile of Presbyterians 2005"
(Louisville: Research Services, 2008), pcusa.org/research/panel/bkg-2006-2008-report.pdf





THE APOSTLES' CREED (Ecumenical Version)

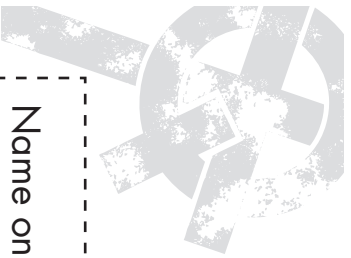
I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.¹

1. *The Presbyterian Hymnal* (Louisville: Westminster/ John Knox Press, 1990), p. 14.

QUESTIONS



Name one word that describes God.

Name one word that describes humanity.

How can humans separate themselves from God?

Does God have a different relationship with Christians compared to non-Christians? Why or why not?

What role do humans play in God's world?



When have you felt really close to God?

When have you felt separated from God?

How do you respond to God's love in your life?



G-3.0200 FROM THE BOOK OF ORDER

The Church of Jesus Christ is the provisional demonstration of what God intends for all of humanity.

- a. The Church is called to be a sign in and for the world of the new reality which God has made available to people in Jesus Christ.
- b. The new reality revealed in Jesus Christ is the new humanity, a new creation, a new beginning for human life in the world:
 - (1) Sin is forgiven.
 - (2) Reconciliation is accomplished.
 - (3) The dividing walls of hostility are torn down.
- c. The Church is the body of Christ, both in its corporate life and in the lives of its individual members, and is called to give shape and substance to this truth.



INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Choose questions from the following list to ask the panel:

- In what leadership roles have you served in our congregation?
- Have you served in leadership roles in other levels of government in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)? If so, which ones?
- What is the role of the church in the world?
- As Reformed Christians, what are our priorities in ministry?
- How do the priorities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) compare to the priorities of other Christian denominations?
- How is our congregation at work in the world?





The proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind



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The shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God



The maintenance of divine worship



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The preservation of the truth



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The promotion of social righteousness



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The exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world



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The great ends of the church are the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind; the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.

—*Book of Order* (G-1.0200)



The church gathers to praise God, to hear God's word for humankind, to baptize and to join in the Lord's Supper, to pray for and present the world to God in worship, to enjoy fellowship, to receive instruction, strength, and comfort, to order and organize its own corporate life, to be tested, renewed, and reformed, and to speak and act in the world's affairs as may be appropriate to the needs of the time.

— *The Confession of 1967* (9.36)
Inclusive Language Text



To assemble the game board: Print and/or photocopy the four game board pages on white card stock. Cut out the four quadrants of the game board and tape them together, using the following diagram as a guide.



top left corner

Assembly

<div style="background-color: #333; color: white; padding: 20px; font-size: 3em; font-weight: bold;">Start</div>		Name three elders on your session. Move forward one space for each you can name.		You are elected commissioner to presbytery. Move forward one space.	?	Move one space for each session committee you can name.
You have been elected to the session. Return to the first blank space on the Session row and keep up the good work!		<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; font-size: 2em;">Session</div> <div style="font-size: 4em; margin: 0 10px;">;</div> <div style="font-size: 4em;">!</div> </div>				
Lose one turn to attend General Assembly.						
?						
The General Assembly publishes church school curriculum. Name your church school teacher or lose one turn.		?	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; font-size: 2em;">PRESBYTERIAN</div> <div style="font-size: 4em; margin: 0 10px;">;</div> <div style="font-size: 4em;">!</div> </div>			



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top right corner

Session

<p>Take an extra turn if you can name your clerk of session.</p>	<p>Take an extra turn if you can name your session moderator.</p>	<p>Name the two offices to which persons may be ordained by a congregation.</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>Tell how a person becomes an elder OR go back to START.</p>
--	---	---	----------	--

Name four governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or lose two turns!

Presb

Find G-11.0103 in the Book of Order. Read the lettered responsibility of presbytery that is the first initial of your first name.

Presbytery

Elder commissioners and ministers attend regular meetings. What are these meetings called?

Find your presbytery in the Mission Yearbook. Read one of the paragraphs to the whole group.

Name your presbytery to take an extra turn.

CHURCH

?

Tape top left corner here





To assemble the game board: Print and/or photocopy the four game board pages on white card stock. Cut out the four quadrants of the game board and tape them together, using the following diagram as a guide.



bottom right corner

Synod

Synod

Presbytery

Take another turn if you can name the city in which your presbytery office is located.

To move three spaces: Name one service your presbytery provides your congregation.

You are elected commissioner to the General Assembly. Move forward three spaces.

?

Move one space for each presbytery camp you can name.

Syn

Using the *Mission Yearbook*, name one mission project supported by your synod.

?

Find your synod in the *Mission Yearbook*. Name one Presbyterian-related college in your synod and move one space.

?

Name your synod and move one space.

Name one of the two parts of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or lose two turns!

tape bottom left corner here

tape top right corner here



To assemble the game board: Print and/or photocopy the four game board pages on white card stock. Cut out the four quadrants of the game board and tape them together, using the following diagram as a guide.



bottom left corner

bottom left corner here

General Assembly

Find the list at the back of the *Mission Yearbook* and read aloud the names of the Presbyterian theological schools.

Use the *Mission Yearbook* to name one country in which PC(USA) mission workers are at work.

?

Take an extra turn if you can name the city in which the General Assembly offices are located.

Move one space for each person you can name from your congregation who has attended General Assembly.

Say the full official name of the denomination or lose two turns!

In the *Mission Yearbook*, find one service your synod offers your congregation.

Skip one turn to attend annual synod meeting.

?

Presbyterian

pot



To create game cards, cut each card out along the dotted lines, fold along the solid line, and glue the backs together.

Session	?	A group wants to start a kindergarten for children with disabilities. They will provide their own leaders and equipment, but want the church to provide the building and all utilities without charge. How do you vote? Why?
Session	?	Local factory workers are on strike. They want safer working conditions. They ask your church to issue a statement in the newspaper in support of their strike. Should the session take such a stand? Why or why not?
Session	?	Christmas will be on Sunday this year. Some people want to call off church school and worship because these activities will interfere with family plans. How do you vote when the session makes this decision?
Session	?	A couple who are not Christians want to get married by a justice of the peace in your sanctuary because they think it is a pretty place. Should the session allow this?
Session	?	The youth want to include a rock song performed by a rock band in the service they are planning for Youth Sunday. One of the rock band players is a member of the youth group. Some adults are opposed. They say that the sanctuary is no place for rock music. What should the session do?



To create game cards, cut each card out along the dotted lines, fold along the solid line, and glue the backs together.

Session	?	Some church members ask the session for a special offering to help the families of several persons who are on trial. They are charged with being spies for another nation. Do you vote for the church to sponsor this offering? Why or why not?
Session	?	An adult church school class wants to set aside the study materials selected by the session to study a six-week course on being Christian parents. Do you give permission for them to do this? Why or why not?
Session	?	A man recently paroled from prison wants to join your church. While he was in prison for armed robbery, he was visited by one of the church members. Do you vote to receive him into membership? Why or why not?
Session	?	The youth fellowship wants permission to celebrate communion at the end of their work camp. How do you vote?
Session	?	The Gideons, a group that distributes Bibles in hotels and prisons, ask permission to speak during Sunday worship. They want your congregation to support their work. Do you vote to let them speak?



To create game cards, cut each card out along the dotted lines, fold along the solid line, and glue the backs together.

Session	?	The Baptist and Methodist churches in your area invite your church to work with them to provide better housing for poor families. They call a meeting to discuss the idea. Do you vote to send a representative from the session?
Session	?	Would you rather serve on a committee that plans the worship life of your congregation or on one that plans for the church school? Explain your choice.
Session	?	The peacemaking committee wants to sponsor a trip to the Middle East to build understanding between Christians there and in the U.S. Do you vote in favor of this trip? Why or why not?
Session	?	Amnesty International, a group that works on behalf of people being tortured, imprisoned, and denied their human rights, asks to speak to your congregation during Sunday worship. Do you vote to invite their speaker?
Session	?	You must cut the church budget. Will you cut back on the church school curriculum budget or on the amount budgeted for purchasing music for the choir? Why?



To create game cards, cut each card out along the dotted lines, fold along the solid line, and glue the backs together.

Presbytery	?	What are two questions you think the presbytery should ask people who want to be ministers?
Presbytery	?	The presbytery can afford to pay either a chaplain to prisoners or a chaplain to students at the state university. For which do you vote? Why?
Presbytery	?	A congregation cannot continue to pay its full-time minister. Should the presbytery provide funds to help the church keep a full-time minister? Or should the presbytery help the church find a part-time minister?
Presbytery	?	A committee of the presbytery wants to ask each church in the presbytery to give \$100 so a poor child can go to the presbytery camp. Do you vote in favor of this? Why or why not?
Presbytery	?	A motion is made that the presbytery send a letter to the president of the United States that urges support for an increase in the minimum wage. How do you vote? Why?



To create game cards, cut each card out along the dotted lines, fold along the solid line, and glue the backs together.

Presbytery	?	A church in your presbytery wants to call a minister whose ideas are not in keeping with the standards of the Presbyterian Constitution. Do you vote to approve this call? Why or why not?
Presbytery	?	The presbytery budget must be cut. Do you vote to cut the camping programs for next summer or to put off plans to start a new church? Why?
Presbytery	?	A group of Presbyterian women ask the presbytery to issue a statement in favor of renewed attempts to enact an Equal Rights Amendment and to send copies of this statement to everyone in the state legislature. Do you vote for this? Why or why not?
Presbytery	?	Which theme do you prefer for the presbytery's youth camp next summer: "Be a Disciple: Treat Others as Jesus Did" or "Living as a Steward of My Gifts and God's World"? Explain your choice.
Presbytery	?	The presbytery nominating committee gives you the choice of serving on one of two committees: a committee that helps people become ministers or a committee that plans all the presbytery's mission projects. Which do you choose? Why?



To create game cards, cut each card out along the dotted lines, fold along the solid line, and glue the backs together.

Presbytery	?	Your presbytery sends you to help a church whose members are in a heated disagreement. However, the church feels the presbytery has no right to interfere. How do you explain the presbytery's role?
Presbytery	?	A small church in your presbytery has been dissolved. Its building could be given to a Korean congregation that is currently worshipping in another church building. Or the building could be sold and the profit given to mission. Which way do you vote? Why?
Presbytery	?	A church asks the presbytery to overture the General Assembly to provide for the ordination of professional directors of Christian education. How do you vote? Why?
Presbytery	?	Some Presbyterians want only Presbyterians to teach in Presbyterian-related colleges. Other Presbyterians say it is more important to hire the best teachers whether or not they are Presbyterian. What do you think?
Synod	?	The retirement home needs a hospital wing. The home for children needs a gym. Synod has money for only one of them now. Which do you think the synod should build first?



To create game cards, cut each card out along the dotted lines, fold along the solid line, and glue the backs together.

Synod ?	Two small presbyteries want to join to form one big presbytery. They think this will help them be a better presbytery. How do you vote? Why?
Synod ?	A chaplain for the state university, hired by the synod, is helping students who for religious reasons protest a military recruiter's work on campus. Some people want the chaplain fired. Others say the chaplain is following Jesus' teachings. Do you vote to fire the chaplain? Why or why not?
Synod ?	The synod wants you to serve either on a board of directors for a school on a Native American reservation or for a downtown community center. On which do you choose to serve? Why?
Synod ?	Do you think the synod should pay \$1,000 for a noted leader to speak to youth group advisors about how to lead successful youth fellowship groups? Why or why not?
Synod ?	You are planning the agenda for a one-day synod meeting. For a one-hour time block you have requests of thirty minutes for the Hunger Task Force, thirty minutes for a visiting mission worker, and thirty minutes for a Native American rights group. What do you do?



To create game cards, cut each card out along the dotted lines, fold along the solid line, and glue the backs together.

Synod	?	You are planning a synod meeting. Will you hold a meeting in a comfortable hotel in a city or at a less expensive, but less comfortable, presbytery camp? Why?
Synod	?	You are on a committee to hire new synod staff. You have two good candidates for the same job. One of them is a member of a racial minority. What reasons could you cite for choosing this candidate for synod staff?
Synod	?	The synod is voting on printing a monthly newsletter to keep people informed about the work of the synod and its churches. Will you vote for the newsletter? Why or why not?
General Assembly	?	The General Assembly budget must be cut. Would you send fewer mission workers to South America or send fewer mission workers to help churches in the U.S.? Explain your choice.
General Assembly	?	Some people want the General Assembly to develop a new statement of faith that is easy to understand. Others say <i>The Book of Confessions</i> is satisfactory the way it is; it just needs to be studied more. How do you vote?



To create game cards, cut each card out along the dotted lines, fold along the solid line, and glue the backs together.

<p>General Assembly</p> <p>?</p>	<p>Presbyterians in the United States speak many languages. Should the church continue to print church school resources in English, Spanish, and Korean or only in English, which is less expensive?</p>
<p>General Assembly</p> <p>?</p>	<p>The <i>Book of Order</i> says nothing about the age of deacons or elders. Some people demand changes in the <i>Book of Order</i> so that officers must be at least thirty and retire from active service at age sixty-five. What do you think?</p>
<p>General Assembly</p> <p>?</p>	<p>The General Assembly is setting mission goals to guide its work. Which should have highest priority: (1) working for justice or (2) evangelism and starting new congregations?</p>
<p>General Assembly</p> <p>?</p>	<p>Should the General Assembly recommend a specific age at which a person should be confirmed? If so, what age should that be?</p>
<p>General Assembly</p> <p>?</p>	<p>Should the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) provide resources about Christian understandings of human sexuality for elementary, middle school, and high school students?</p>



To create game cards, cut each card out along the dotted lines, fold along the solid line, and glue the backs together.

<p>General Assembly</p> <p>?</p>	<p>A commissioner at General Assembly asks that the church take a stand opposed to the sale of handguns in the United States. How do you vote on this request? Why?</p>
<p>General Assembly</p> <p>?</p>	<p>On which General Assembly task force would you rather work: (1) a committee to develop a new statement of faith or (2) a committee to revise the Directory for Worship? Why?</p>
<p>General Assembly</p> <p>?</p>	<p>On which General Assembly task force would you rather work: (1) a committee to plan future meetings of the General Assembly or (2) a committee to find ways for the church to respond to the worldwide AIDS epidemic?</p>