

Have you paid your per capita yet? There's still time before the end of the year! How can we get our congregations excited about per capita? Seriously. If each member of our churches paid just \$38.04 once a year over and above their tithe or pledge then our Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly would have adequate financial resources to support all our congregations!

At First Presbyterian, Charleston, we make it fun and easy! We have Per Capita Game Night in January. We've played Bingo and board games, provided pizza and hot chocolate and received donations towards Per Capita all in one night of wonderful fellowship. Per Capita is a line item in our mission budget, but over half of the per capita funds in our congregation are given by individuals who believe that \$38.04 in addition to their tithe or pledge is their fair share to the larger church. All we have to do is ask, state the need and be an advocate for our Presbytery.

We have used this excellent brochure from the Office of General Assembly to make bulletin inserts and to answer questions. You can go to pcusa.org website and type in "per capita" to find more information. Our own Presbytery website has a link for per capita.

Why should we give this gift of per capita? Well, we're a connectional church and we depend on each other. Of each gift of \$38.04, the highest percentage \$27.60 stays right here in our Presbytery. Look on pages [42](#), [43](#), [44](#) of your docket. Has your church met it's commitment to Presbytery? Does your church benefit from the staff we employ? Does your church benefit from the work of the Committees we elect? Do you call on the Presbytery when you say goodbye to your pastor or when you're ready to call a new pastor?

As I mentioned this morning, when Granger, Mary, Thomas and I were elected as your commissioners to General Assembly in Pittsburgh this summer, all our expenses were covered. By whom? The portion of your per capita gift to General Assembly (only \$6.63 out of the \$38.04) paid our airfare, hotel and meals so we could attend at no expense to ourselves, our congregations, or this Presbytery.

Let's face it, there are administrative costs for every organization including the local church. Our Presbytery depends on gifts of per capita and faces hardships when churches fail to pay these funds. Our Presbytery is obligated to pay the Synod and General Assembly portion of per capita whether we fulfill our giving or not.

Paying per capita is nothing new. We've been giving the gift of per capita for over 150 years to the larger church because we belong to the larger church in the world. What a blessing it would be if every congregation paid 100% of their per capita gift this year! Are you willing to give the gift?

Presented at the September 20, 2012 Stated Meeting by Rev. Jan Hawkins