



## CHURCHWIDE SPECIAL OFFERINGS FINDINGS FROM THE MAY 2011 SURVEY

The Presbyterian Panel consists of three nationally representative samples of groups affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.): members, elders (also known as ruling elders) who are serving on session, and ministers (also known as teaching elders). Ministers are split into two groups: *pastors*, serving congregations, and *specialized clergy*, serving elsewhere. New samples are drawn every three years. These pages summarize findings from the eleventh survey completed by the 2009-2011 Panel, sampled in the fall of 2008.

### IN THIS SUMMARY

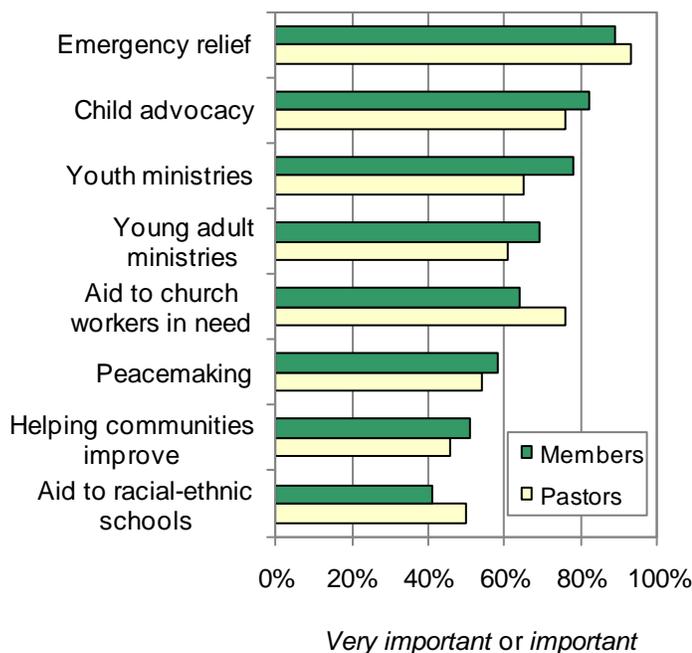
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## OFFERING-SUPPORTED MINISTRIES

### Importance of PC(USA) Activities

- ✓ Majorities of panelists in each group believe that it is *very important* or *important* for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to engage in six of eight activities that PC(USA) churchwide special offerings help to fund: emergency relief, advocating on behalf of children, youth ministries, young adult ministries, financial assistance for church workers in need, and peacemaking.

Figure 1. Importance of PC(USA) Activities



### PC(USA) Churchwide Special Offerings

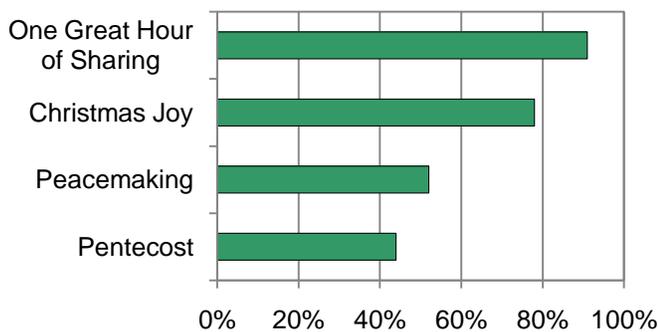
The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) promotes four churchwide special offerings among its congregations:

- **The One Great Hour of Sharing Offering**, usually received around Easter, helps fund emergency relief and community development through three PC(USA) ministries: Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People.
- **The Pentecost Offering**, usually received on Pentecost Sunday in May or June, helps fund two PC(USA) programs: child advocacy and youth and young adult ministries. Congregations that receive the Pentecost Offering choose a local ministry for at-risk children to receive 40% of their congregation's contributions.
- **The Peacemaking Offering**, usually received on World Communion Sunday in early October, helps fund the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program and peacemaking programs in presbyteries and synods. One-quarter of a congregation's Peacemaking Offering contributions go to a local peacemaking effort of the congregation's choosing.
- **The Christmas Joy Offering**, usually received during Advent, helps fund six PC(USA)-related racial-ethnic schools and colleges and a Board of Pensions program to aid needy church workers (active and retired) and their family members.

## Congregations Receiving Each Offering

- ✓ Large majorities of elders report that their congregation received the 2011 One Great Hour of Sharing Offering (91%) and the 2010 Christmas Joy Offering (78%).
- ✓ A small majority of elders report that their congregation received the 2010 Peacemaking Offering (52%), and four in nine report that their congregation received the 2010 Pentecost Offering (44%).

**Figure 2. Congregational Participation in Churchwide Special Offerings, Elders' Responses**



## Contributions to the Offerings

- ✓ In each group at least three in five panelists whose congregation received a specific churchwide special offering report that they or another member of their household contributed to the offering:
  - Christmas Joy Offering (members, 79%; elders, 75%; pastors, 71%; specialized clergy, 70%).
  - One Great Hour of Sharing Offering (71%; 76%; 78%; 81%).
  - Pentecost Offering (64%; 77%; 68%; 64%).
  - Peacemaking Offering (60%; 68%; 71%; 70%).
- ✓ The median household contribution to each churchwide special offering ranged between \$25 and \$50. (The median is the middle number in an ordered series of numbers.)

## Motivations for Giving: Supporting Mission

- ✓ Among those in each group who personally contributed to the Peacemaking, One Great Hour of Sharing, or Pentecost offerings, between three in five and three-quarters report that the fact that they were directly supporting mission motivated them *a great deal* or *quite a bit* to contribute:
  - Peacemaking Offering (members, 75%; elders, 62%; pastors, 69%; specialized clergy, 68%).
  - One Great Hour of Sharing Offering (74%; 73%; 76%; 73%).
  - Pentecost Offering (67%; 62%; 66%; 72%).

- ✓ Around three in five panelists who contributed to the Christmas Joy Offering report that they did so *a great deal* or *quite a bit* because they were supporting mission directly (members, 61%; elders, 63%; pastors, 61%; specialized clergy, 60%).

## Motivations for Giving: Supporting the PC(USA)

- ✓ At least five in nine ministers—but no more than half of members and elders—who contributed to three of the four offerings report that the opportunity to support the PC(USA) motivated them *a great deal* or *quite a bit* to do so:
  - Peacemaking Offering (members, 49%; elders, 48%; pastors, 64%; specialized clergy, 63%).
  - One Great Hour of Sharing Offering (43%; 50%; 56%; 58%).
  - Christmas Joy Offering (42%; 42%; 56%; 56%).
- ✓ For three in five pastors (62%), half of members (52%) and specialized clergy (54%), and two in five elders (43%), supporting the PC(USA) was *a great deal* or *quite a bit* of a motivation to give to the Pentecost Offering.

## Other Motivations for Giving

- ✓ Habit or custom motivated offering giving *a great deal* or *quite a bit* for only minorities of panelists in each group who gave to each offering:
  - Christmas Joy Offering (members, 38%; elders, 40%; pastors, 41%; specialized clergy, 40%).
  - One Great Hour of Sharing Offering (36%; 43%; 39%; 39%).
  - Peacemaking Offering (30%; 27%; 41%; 36%).
  - Pentecost Offering (23%; 39%; 40%; 33%).
- ✓ The time of year a special offering is received motivated offering giving *a great deal* or *quite a bit* for no more than one-third of panelists in each group:
  - Christmas Joy Offering (members, 25%; elders, 32%; pastors, 32%; specialized clergy, 22%).
  - One Great Hour of Sharing Offering (24%; 25%; 31%; 23%).
  - Peacemaking Offering (4%; 10%; 18%; 8%).
  - Pentecost Offering (2%; 14%; 17%; 5%).
- ✓ A personal request motivated giving to each offering *a great deal* or *quite a bit* for fewer than one in five panelists in each group:
  - Pentecost Offering (members, 14%; elders, 9%; pastors, 11%; specialized clergy, 11%).
  - One Great Hour of Sharing Offering (13%; 13%; 16%; 17%).
  - Christmas Joy Offering (11%; 13%; 12%; 17%).
  - Peacemaking Offering (10%; 10%; 12%; 14%).

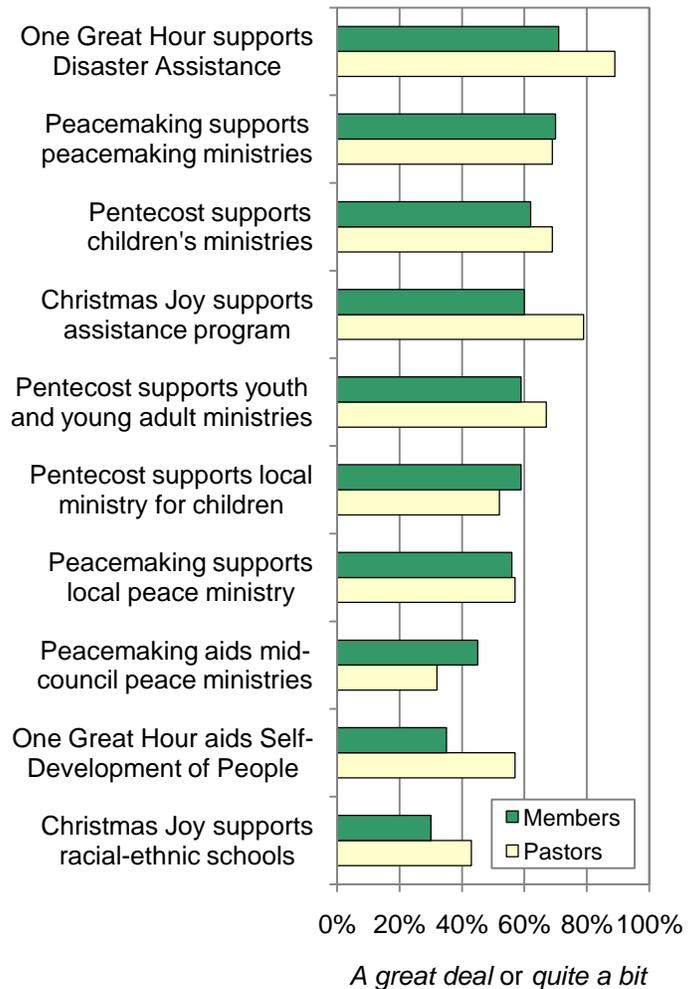
**Causes Each Offering Supports**

- ✓ More than two-thirds of panelists who gave to two churchwide special offerings report that specific causes that these offerings support motivated them *a great deal* or *quite a bit* to give to each:
  - One Great Hour of Sharing Offering, because the money received supports Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (members, 71%; elders, 77%; pastors, 89%; specialized clergy, 84%).
  - Peacemaking Offering, because the money received supports peacemaking ministries (70%; 68%; 69%; 78%).
- ✓ Other causes supported by the offerings also motivated majorities of panelists *a great deal* or *quite a bit* to contribute to three offerings:
  - Pentecost Offering, because the money received in this offering supports ministries with children (members, 62%; elders, 58%; pastors, 69%; specialized clergy, 64%).
  - Christmas Joy Offering, because funds received support the PC(USA) Board of Pensions’ assistance program that aids church workers (active and retired) and their family members who have special economic needs (60%; 66%; 79%; 79%).
  - Pentecost Offering, because the money received in this offering supports ministries with youth and young adults (59%; 54%; 67%; 67%).
- ✓ Knowing that money received in the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering supports the Self-Development of People ministry motivated about three in five ministers (pastors, 57%; specialized clergy, 63%)—but only about two in five members (35%) and elders (45%)—*a great deal* or *quite a bit* to contribute to the offering.
- ✓ Knowing that money received in the Christmas Joy Offering aids PC(USA)-related racial-ethnic schools and colleges motivated about four in nine ministers (pastors, 43%; specialized clergy, 49%)—but only three in ten members (30%) and elders (30%)—*a great deal* or *quite a bit* to give.

**Choosing a Local Cause to Support**

- ✓ Knowing that portions of the money received in the Pentecost and Peacemaking offerings go to a local ministry of the congregation’s choosing motivated half or more in each group *a great deal* or *quite a bit* to contribute to the 2010 offerings:
  - Pentecost Offering (members, 59%; elders, 58%; pastors, 52%; specialized clergy, 53%).
  - Peacemaking Offering (56%; 54%; 57%; 50%).

**Figure 3. Cause-Specific Motivations for Contributing**



**Christmas Joy Offering Thank You Letter**

- ✓ Half of pastors whose congregation received the 2010 Christmas Joy Offering (52%) report that the congregation received a letter from the PC(USA) thanking them for their contributions. Only 4% of pastors say their congregation did not receive a letter. Four in nine (43%) *don't know*.

**One Great Hour of Sharing Offering Promotion**

- ✓ More than nine in ten panelists in each group (members, 91%; elders, 96%; pastors, 93%; specialized clergy, 95%) whose congregation received the 2011 One Great Hour of Sharing Offering recall seeing a bulletin insert about the offering.
- ✓ Smaller majorities in each group (members, 70%; elders, 64%; pastors, 70%; specialized clergy, 55%) saw a church newsletter article about the 2011 One Great Hour of Sharing Offering.

# PERSPECTIVES ON GIVING

## Other Giving

- ✓ Three in five members (59%) and elders (58%) and about four in five ministers (pastors, 77%; specialized clergy, 84%) report that they or someone else in their household has contributed money to a non-PC(USA) ministry or cause during the past 12 months.

## Giving by Specific Means

- ✓ During the past 12 months, between half and two-thirds of panelists or other members of their household (members, 58%; elders, 62%; pastors, 50%; specialized clergy, 63%) have made a charitable contribution in response to a direct-mail solicitation.
- ✓ Sizable minorities of panelists in each group (or members of their household) have contributed to a charity in the following ways during the same period:
  - Through online giving (members, 28%; elders, 35%; pastors, 44%; specialized clergy, 46%).
  - Through an automated giving process (for example, through a deduction from a checking account) (25%; 26%; 28%; 32%).
  - In response to a telephone solicitation (24%; 27%; 23%; 31%).

## Other Ministries?

- ✓ Is there a ministry at the national level that the PC(USA) churchwide special offerings do *not* currently fund that they *should* fund? More panelists in each group believe there is *no* such ministry (members, 28%; elders, 29%; pastors, 42%; specialized clergy, 33%) than believe there *is* such a ministry (7%; 5%; 13%; 15%). Even more panelists in each group (65%; 65%; 45%; 52%), however, are *not sure* if there is such a ministry.

## Likelihood of Contributing After Changes

- ✓ Between two in five and two-thirds of panelists in each group report they would be *much more likely* or *more likely* to give to PC(USA) churchwide special offerings in the next 12 months if the PC(USA):
  - Gave their congregation the option of directing a portion of the funds received to a local cause of their congregation's choice or of increasing the portion of funds it can direct to a local cause (members, 64%; elders, 62%; pastors, 48%; specialized clergy, 47%).
  - Gave them and their congregation more information throughout the year about ministries supported by their churchwide special offering giving (49%; 48%; 45%; 55%).
  - Gave them as individuals more choice about ministries they can support through churchwide special offering giving (47%; 47%; 42%; 41%).

## Viewing Promotional Resources

- ✓ Viewing church bulletin inserts with stories about the impact of the churchwide special offerings is something that seven in eight elders (83%) and three-quarters of members (76%), pastors (75%), and specialized clergy (74%) would be *extremely interested* or *interested* in doing during the next 12 months.
- ✓ Between one-quarter and three in five panelists in each group would be *extremely interested* or *interested* in reading newsletters or watching videos in the next year:
  - Reading printed newsletters about churchwide special offerings' impact (members, 47%; elders, 53%; pastors, 59%; specialized clergy, 45%).
  - Viewing video clips about churchwide special offering beneficiaries on websites such as the PC(USA) site or YouTube (26%; 31%; 59%; 54%).

	Members	Elders	Ministers
Number of surveys sent .....	625	902	1,242
Number of undeliverable surveys and ineligible respondents .....	0	4	10
Number of surveys completed .....	245	355	600‡
Response rate .....	39%	39%	48%

‡Of the 598 returned surveys, 390 came from pastors and 208 from specialized clergy; 2 could not be classified.

**The survey was mailed on May 5, 2011**, with returns accepted through July 25, 2011. Results are subject to sampling and other errors. Small differences should be interpreted cautiously. In general, differences of less than 8% between samples are not statistically meaningful.

**For more numbers and interpretation** of these results, a report will be available on the web or for \$15 from Presbyterian Distribution Service (800-524-2612; order PDS# 20056-11312). It will include tables with percentage responses to each survey question.

### LISTENING TO PRESBYTERIANS SINCE 1973

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