

## Per Capita Note

*“Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love,  
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.”*

It may not be the first thing that comes to your mind when you think about per capita, but it's at the top for me. It is a tie that binds us together, ideally in Christian love, in mutual support for mission and administration, and in the vision that together we can accomplish more in Christ's name than we can individually.

As far as “membership” fees go, it's pretty modest. We just joined the YMCA, which will cost us about \$100 a month. All those streaming services add up to, with the cheapest on our bill coming in at \$10.99 a month. Other expenses necessary to daily life, like rent or mortgage, utilities, transportation, and others all add to the list of ways we support daily life and living. The per capita for 2022 is set at \$29.80 per member for New Castle Presbytery.

Per capita is the way we support the work of the church, alongside our mission giving. It was first established in the United States to help provide transportation for commissioners to the General Assembly, back when commissioners traveled by horseback or wagon and stayed in homes or tents. Today, per capita supports much more than this one need, helping to provide for the necessary foundational pieces that give our ministry and mission a strong place to stand.

How is per capita calculated? Well, that's the part that often trips us up. It's based on membership, but not on the current membership right now. Here's how it works:

In **January of 2021**, each clerk of session reported through the Annual Statistical Report each congregation's membership as of the **end of 2020**. Then in the summer and fall of 2021, your Presbytery works on and approves a **budget for 2022** based on those numbers from 2020.

See how that works? Because of the way we report our statistics annually, per capita functions on a two-year cycle. ***Numbers reported this year, in 2022, for membership at the end of 2021, will help us set the budget for 2023, and so on.***

News flash! This is one of the reasons why it's so important to take the time to fill out your annual statistical report each year! If you don't, the numbers from the previous year carry over.

Not only is the Presbytery's budget set this way, but the Synod and the General Assembly use those numbers as well. The per capita the Presbytery is obligated to pay through our ties that bind to the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic and the General Assembly of the PC(USA) is based on that same cycle.

Can we shift those per capita numbers? No, actually, we can't. What's been reported is what's official, and those are the numbers we have to go by. That is part of the tie that binds, and since it's how we calculate the funds available for mission and ministry, we do our best to report truthfully and remit faithfully.

If you have any questions, or if a conversation with the session would be helpful, please let me know! I'm always happy to have an opportunity to build our relationships, and strengthen those ties that bind!

In Christ,  
Cindy

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*May 10, 2022*