

A Progressive Denomination

We sincerely desire to spread the Gospel to every land, to make disciples and teach them the faith once for all delivered by God to His Church. And we happily serve men in need, resisting man's inhumanity to man, working for peace, honor, and dignity among all men without discrimination.

We are "conservative," but we're not old fashioned! We hold to the faith of the Bible and of our fathers, but we strive to proclaim God's Truth as imaginatively and creatively as possible.

We are busy. Busy about God's work. Starting new churches in the United States and Canada; supporting small congregations who want a full ministry in their communities; teaching and training workers and leaders how to study, apply, obey and share the Scriptures; sending missionaries to many countries throughout the world; publishing literature and curricula for individuals, groups, schools, and churches; caring for retired ministers and their families; sponsoring youth and children's ministries; guiding men and women and families to a closer walk with the living God.

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Local Church:

The Presbyterian Church in America

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Presbyterian Church in America

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND PUBLICATIONS

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A Young Denomination

The birth date of the *Presbyterian Church in America* is December 4, 1973. (But our spiritual roots are in the Protestant Reformation.)

We came into existence because we felt strongly the need for a scriptural, evangelical and Reformed witness to Christ. We wanted to be a part of a denomination which honors God and His Word. We desired a believing fellowship which is committed to evangelism, Christian education and training as top priorities in the Church. We believed that ministers and church officers should affirm without compromise the great biblical beliefs of Christianity.

Many of our churches separated from their denomination because of the compromise of our basic Christian doctrines. Though we earnestly desired close fellowship with Christians of like mind, we wanted no part of the National or World Councils of Churches because of their pluralistic theology. (We are members of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Churches and the National Evangelical Association.) After years of sincere efforts to call our former denomination to revival and renewal we were led by God to withdraw and form a new body. The new denomination began with 250 congregations and 50,000 members.

Within a few years it grew to include more than 500 churches with nearly 80,000 members. In 1982 the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod joined with us, bringing almost 25,000 new members into the PCA. As of 2009, we counted more than 1693 churches, with over 340,852 members throughout the United States and Canada. Of the numerous Presbyterian denominations in North America, the PCA is among the fastest growing. Together we are lifting high a banner of love and testimony to Jesus Christ the Lord, locally and globally.

A Scriptural Denomination

Our Church seeks to be scriptural in both its government and its doctrine.

The form of church government we believe is most biblical is called "Presbyterian." This means the local churches are governed by "presbyters," or elders, who are elected by the people. There are two kinds of elders. Teaching elders are pastors. Ruling elders are ordained laymen. This was the kind of government the New Testament Church enjoyed (for instance, see Acts 20:17; Titus 1:5-7). It has been the form followed by the great Reformed and Presbyterian branches of Christendom since the days of John Calvin in Europe and John Knox in England and Scotland.

The elders sit in a "session." This session has the oversight of the faith and life of the local church congregation.

Representatives from the session along with the ordained ministers of the churches compose the "presbytery." The presbytery has oversight of the ministries of the churches in a given geographical area. Through the presbytery the work of many churches is coordinated and their combined efforts enable them to extend the Kingdom of Christ much farther than would otherwise be possible.

The local churches also send commissioners - elders and ministers - to the highest court of the church, the "General Assembly." The assembly meets annually and enables all the churches to have a voice in guiding the spiritual and practical affairs of the entire denomination.

In the Presbyterian Church in America the local church owns and controls its property. A church's relationship with the denomination is based on mutual love and commitment to the Bible, the Reformed faith, and the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. Though a congregation may withdraw from the denomination at any time by a simple majority vote of its members, we agree that the Bible teaches that congregations should be yoked in faith and practice and

should bind themselves together for the edification of the whole body of Christ.

Our form of doctrine is also scriptural. As "Presbyterian" refers to our form of government so "Reformed" denotes our doctrinal beliefs. We stand in the ancient heritage of true-to-the-Bible theology. We earnestly strive to follow Christ and His Apostles. We believe that the purest expressions of scriptural doctrine are found in the Calvinistic creeds, particularly the Westminster Confession of Faith with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms.

This means that we believe in the Trinity. There is one God who exists eternally in three Persons--the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

We believe that the Bible is the written Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit and without error in the original manuscripts. The Bible is our infallible and divine authority in all matters of faith and life.

We believe that all men are sinners and are totally unable to save themselves or even to cooperate with God in efforts to earn their salvation.

We believe that salvation is by God's action alone, who sovereignly chooses out of the fallen race of mankind those whom He will save. God alone saves the people whom He draws to Jesus by His Holy Spirit. He convinces them of their sin and enlightens them so that they repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as He is offered in the Gospel. Because God alone knows who are His, we call on people everywhere to repent and to trust in Jesus Christ.

We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, who became man and lived and died and rose again to atone for the sins of those who trust Him alone for their salvation. Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man.

We believe that God's Holy Spirit gives Christians the daily strength and wisdom they need to walk according to His will and to grow in holiness.

We believe that Jesus Christ shall return personally, visibly, and bodily to judge all mankind and to receive His people unto Himself.