

“Whenever we
have an
opportunity,
let us work
for the good
of all, and
especially
for those of
the family of
faith.”

Galatians 6:10

About the Assistance Program

The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) oversees benefits and assistance programs for Presbyterian church workers and their families. When the needs of these servants exceed the bounds of the Benefits Plan, personal resources, and other means of support, the Assistance Program provides an important safety net. It also provides critical vocational, leadership, and other training support to strengthen the church's future leadership.

To **inquire about a particular assistance program** or to **help support our clergy** and other church workers, please call the Board of Pensions at 800-773-7752 (800-PRESPLAN).

Additional Information

For program details, please visit the Board of Pensions Web site, www.pensions.org, or call the Board of Pensions at 800-773-7752 (800-PRESPLAN). Individual program descriptions, grant applications, and more are available.

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Caring for those who
serve the church

THE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

“God...will not overlook your work and the love that you showed for his sake in serving the saints, as you still do.”

Hebrews 6:10

Those who help others are often the last to seek help themselves. But sometimes, pastors and other church workers need our help.

CARING

It's not uncommon for pastors and other church workers to make **sacrifices** in order to serve others.

Some give up promising careers to follow the call to ministry. Others uproot their families to serve small rural or urban congregations of limited means. Still others serve as missionaries, ministering around the world.

No matter where they serve, most clergy face far greater demands on their time, skills, and resources than ever before. These challenges can affect pastors financially, emotionally, or both. But whether the problem is an unforeseen financial crisis, the need to strengthen pastoral skills, or inadequate funds to support a long retirement, the **Assistance Program** of The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is there to help.

Designed to meet **specific assistance needs of Presbyterian pastors and other church workers** at various points in their lives, the Assistance Program

comprises a range of programs that complement the Benefits Plan. The programs range from emergency grants for church workers facing financial hardship to conferences for pastors that address clergy burnout and stress.

These programs, which target “those of the family of faith,” express the **caring** of the many generous Presbyterians who support them.



GRANTS & OTHER PROGRAMS

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has long been concerned with the **well-being of its ministers**, and the Board of Pensions Assistance Program springs from this rich tradition of caring. In 1717, the church established the Fund for Pious Uses to support frontier missionaries and their widows and children. Today, the Assistance Program serves nearly a thousand pastors and other church workers a year, providing grants and other programs to meet both the changing and constant assistance needs of church workers.

• Urgent Financial Needs

Pastors and other church workers whose salaries are limited sometimes need a little extra help — to assist with the extraordinary medical bills associated with a long illness, for instance. To help clergy and other church workers with unexpected financial needs, the Assistance Program offers several grants, often working hand in hand with middle governing bodies. It offers shared, emergency, adoption assistance, and transition-to-college assistance grants to qualifying Plan members.

• Retirement Financial and Housing Support

Some dedicated church servants struggle to meet their living expenses and housing costs when they retire. The Assistance Program supplements the monthly income of retired church servants who have long served the church and participated in the Benefits Plan, and who, despite their best efforts to prepare for retirement, have a demonstrated need for this assistance. A housing supplement program also is available for qualifying retirees.

• Pastoral Leadership and Retention

The Assistance Program administers programs to help support and retain our clergy. These include seminary debt assistance, middle governing body grants, Presbyterian CREDO, and sabbatical support grants. Each of these programs addresses a specific need with the goal of strengthening church leadership.



PROMISE

When a pastor joins a Presbyterian church, the congregation promises to “provide for her/his welfare . . . and to stand by her/him in trouble and share her/his joys.”¹ The Assistance Program offers an important means for church members to uphold that promise.

Those who support the Assistance Program provide financial relief to clergy and other church workers with demonstrated financial need and foster their professional development by providing funding for practical skill-building and other educational programs. Working through the Board of Pensions Assistance Program, church members can keep their promise to clergy to **sustain them** throughout their ministry.

FUNDING

Unlike the Benefits Plan, which is funded by dues, the Assistance Program relies on donations for its funding. Each year the Assistance Program gratefully receives a portion of the **Christmas Joy Offering**. Even so, that portion funds less than half the current program expenses, and the need for assistance continues to grow. More than fifty percent of the funding for the Assistance Program comes from other **gifts and bequests to the Board of Pensions**, as well as income from endowments.

The Board will continue to depend on the generosity of Presbyterians throughout the United States.

¹ *Book of Order*, W-4.4006b(3)