

## JOHN CALVIN PRESBYTERY REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER

Presbyterians love acronyms! I think this may be because it's a way to get all the descriptive words in without saying them every time. They're still there, but in a shortened form. The Presbyterian church has six agencies—some might say seven, with the recent formation of the Administrative Services Group. Please see below a short lesson on the PCUSA.

The **Presbyterian Foundation** manages funds from donors and investments. It was established in 1799, and its assets are greater than \$1 billion dollars. The Presbyterian Foundation pays careful attention to responsible investing, avoiding investments which are contrary to the policies of the Presbyterian Church USA. It's the only agency without a regularly used acronym. Maybe they didn't have acronyms in 1799.

The **Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program (PILP)** provides low-cost loans to PCUSA entities for construction, improvement, and purchase of buildings. Individuals and congregations invest with PILP, and PILP uses those funds to lend money. John Calvin Presbytery welcomed a presenter from PILP to a recent meeting.

The **Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA)** is perhaps the most visible agency. It is funded primarily by shared mission contributions. Matthew 25, the Vital Congregations Initiative, World Mission, the International Peacemaker, the Special Offerings (One Great Hour of Sharing, Christmas Joy, Peace and Global Witness, Pentecost), and Presbyterian Disaster Agency buckets are from the PMA. These are just a few ministries of the PMA.

**Office of the General Assembly (OGA)** is responsible for the Book of Order, the biennial General Assembly meetings, ordination standards, the Presbyterian Historical Society, rolls, minutes and statistics, the call search system, and the GA Permanent Judicial Commission. OGA is funded primarily by per capita.

**Presbyterian Publishing** “publishes resources that advance religious scholarship, stimulate conversation about moral values, and inspire faithful living.” There are books, children's books, and curriculum to enjoy. Some are print; some are download. All the curriculum is designed with the person in the pew in mind, and every piece is designed so that any Presbyterian can successfully lead the study.

The **Board of Pensions** offers medical and pension (retirement, death, and disability) for church employees. Many churches in John Calvin Presbytery are involved with the Board of Pensions.

There are 16 synods in the PCUSA. Our synod, the Synod of Mid-America, has six presbyteries.

After several recent consolidations, there are now 166 presbyteries in the PCUSA, and over 8000 congregations. Just as local congregations each have their own culture, each presbytery has its own way of living out our call to be Christ's witness in the world. Let us celebrate the many ways God has called us, and blessed us.

Malinda Spencer