

What are the PCUSA Special Offerings and TEF?

The Presbyterian Church (USA) has announced the following Special Offerings in 2017. Churches can receive these offerings during the following seasons. Great resources are available to churches at specialofferings.pcusa.org. The web site also includes an interactive map which shows where prior funds are being used to help people in need.

One Great Hour of Sharing: Hunger – Disaster Assistance – Self Development

OGHS reflects the church's commitment to helping people around the world who do not have enough to eat, those who have suffered from disasters, and those who are lifting themselves up and working hard. This offering can be received between March 1 – April 16, 2017; however, most congregations collect this offering on **Easter Sunday**, Palm Sunday or both. Presbyterian Mission Agency programs that benefit from this offering include:

- Presbyterian Hunger Program
- Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
- Self-Development of People

Pentecost Offering: Children-At-Risk – Youth – Young Adults

The Pentecost offering reflects the church's commitment to helping children and youth to reach their full potential. It also addresses the God's call to help "the least of these," children who have been abused, neglected, and abandoned. This offering can be received between April 17 – June 4, 2017; however, most congregations collect this offering on **Pentecost Sunday**. Congregations are encouraged to gift 40% of this offering to a local agency serving children-at-risk and to gift 60% to these Presbyterian Mission Agency programs:

- Young Adult Volunteers
- Ministries for Youth
- Children-At-Risk

Peace and Global Witness Offering – Blessed are the Peacemakers

The Peace and Global Witness Offering reflects the church's commitment promoting the Peace of Christ by addressing systems of injustice across the world. This offering can be received between September 3 – October 1, 2017; however, most congregations collect this offering on **World Communion Sunday**. Congregations are encouraged to use 25% to connect with the global witness of Christ' peace, 25% to their Presbytery and Synod for peace and reconciliation ministries, and 50% to these Presbyterian Mission Agency for peace and justice ministries. Excellent minutes for mission and other resources are available online regarding these peace and justice initiatives:

- Proclaiming Peace
- International Peacemakers
- Welcoming Refugees
- Unrelenting Pursuit of Peace in South Sudan

Christmas Joy Offering – Supporting Past, Present and Future Leaders

The Christmas Joy Offering reflects the church's commitment to providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges. This offering can be received between December 3 – 24, 2017; however, most congregations receive it on **Christmas Eve**. Churches are encouraged to send 100% of these funds to the Presbyterian Mission Agency to help pastors through the Board of Pensions Pastor's Assistance Program and students attending racial ethnic schools and colleges. Numerous resources are available online.

Important National Offering for our Presbyterian Church (USA) Seminaries

The PCUSA created the Theological Education Fund (TEF) to provide Synods, Presbyteries, Congregations and Individuals, if they choose, one place where they can make a gift that will benefit all ten of our PCUSA seminaries. The fund is housed at the Presbyterian Foundation and is the sole source of denomination-wide funding for seminaries from the PC(USA).

Gifts to this fund help ensure every church has a seminary-trained pastor. Seminaries are good stewards of the funds we provide. Research shows that 91 percent of Presbyterian seminary graduates are employed in the fields they've been called to serve in within one year. Presbyterian seminary graduates also have less debt than their peers at other seminaries, giving them more flexibility to follow the call of God, no matter where it might lead.

We need these graduates – and need more to see a clear path to seminary. Out of the current clergy serving in Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations, 85 percent will likely retire in the next decade. The next generation of seminarians is energized, enthusiastic and ready to serve, and it is our vision to use the Theological Education Fund to buoy their service to the church.

Gifts to the Theological Education Fund can be mailed to Mission Presbytery or to the Presbyterian Foundation, 200 E 12th St, Jeffersonville, IN 47130. Thank you.

- Prepared by Rev. Peter D. Crouch, Chair
Stewardship Committee
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