

Per Capita: Why We Do It? What is It? How Can You Participate?

Why do we do it?

Each year, Presbyterians across the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) make a commitment to support one another through per capita giving. This call to generosity is deeply rooted in the values that guide what it means to be Presbyterian. Presbyterians believe in a priesthood of all believers, being a connectional church, and that all worshipping communities are equally important and valuable to God's church. We rely on each other in our mission and governance of the church.



What is it?

Currently the per capita for Presbytery of Southern Kansas is \$43.00. PCUSA General Assembly, The Synod of Mid-America and the Presbytery of Southern Kansas each share a portion of per capita. Per capita for our churches is based on membership. So for 2026 if your church has 11 members your per capita amount would be \$473.00 and would be paid to the Presbytery to be distributed to Synod and General Assembly.

How can your church participate individually and corporately?

Even if your church does not pay its portion in full, our Presbytery pays the full amount that is due. It is important that membership rolls are not inflated and reflects your actual membership at the end of each year. Per capita is based on the membership roll of each church on December 31. For example, your 2026 per capita is based on December 31, 2024 reported membership figures.

We thank you for your per capita dollars for mission, ministry, and governance.

Presbytery of Southern Kansas

8918 W. 21st St. N., Suite 200, PMB 101

Wichita, KS 67205

316-946-9481

pskoffice22@gmail.com

pbysk.org

OFFICE HOURS

PSK The Presbytery of Southern Kansas does not have an office. We are located everywhere that the church exists! All our staff work remote, and are happy to connect with you.

On the Wind

A publication of the
Presbytery of Southern Kansas
October 2026

www.pbysk.org



The Nature of Change

Dear Friends,

I love sunflowers. This time of year, when the wild sunflowers are filling the ditches and byways, may be one of my favorite seasons in Kansas. Sunflowers, as you know, are heliotropic – they turn toward the sun. And they signal the change of season. In fact, I am writing this letter to you on the autumnal equinox. From now until spring, the days will grow shorter and the nights will grow longer.

This change of season as I begin my third year as your Executive Presbyter has me reflecting about the nature of change. Sometimes change is easy, sometimes it is not. Even welcome changes, like a new baby or a wedding, are stressful events. Whether changes are welcome or unwelcome, even when we know they are necessary, they can produce more stress, even resistance. Change is inevitable. We've been through a lot of changes in the last two years: new activities, new people, new approaches. And we've reclaimed some old practices that may feel like big changes: connecting, guiding, visiting more churches and Sessions, being more present in the lives of our congregations.



In a couple of weeks, the Presbytery Coordinating Team will be meeting for a daylong retreat as we prayerfully discern how to lead the Presbytery in the coming year. We don't know what changes will come to us unexpectedly, but we do know that we will introduce some changes. Ronald Heifetz famously said that "Leadership is disappointing people at a rate they can absorb." In other words, leading through change is certain to be disappointing to someone. I would add that leadership is *having the courage* to disappoint people.

Last year on the Ruby Slippers Tour we talked about courage, heart, and brains. We have all three, but this coming year, I think we may need to call on our courage the most often. In *The Screwtape Letters*, C. S. Lewis said that "Courage is not simply

"The Nature of Change" continued on page 2

one of the virtues, but the form of every virtue at the testing point.” In other words, wisdom, love, skill, goodness, all require courage when we are tested. In times of challenge and adversity, courage is the first virtue we must claim. Fortunately we can rely in these times on the promise of Jesus, who said, “I have said this to you so that in me you may have peace. In the world you face persecution, but take **courage**: I have conquered the world!” (John 16:33)

So you might well be asking, “What does this have to do with sunflowers, Christina?” And as unoriginal as it may be, I would answer that like the sunflowers, we turn our faces to the source of light: Jesus. He is with us in this moment, and we can draw courage from that reality. When we are tested, challenged, uncertain, we can turn toward the Son. And in the night, we can rest well, knowing that the sun is still there, shining even when we cannot see it. God in Christ is with us, so take courage, and turn your face to the Son.

The Presbytery Responds to Urgent Needs Following ICE Sweeps in Western Kansas Communities

Last week, ICE personnel conducted sweeps in towns across Western Kansas, with particularly intense activity in Dodge City, Garden City, and Liberal. We have congregations in all three towns. This ICE action has created a ripple of fear and need across these communities. In one Dodge City school, it was reported that more than a hundred children were absent the day after the raids.



Additionally, many small businesses have temporarily closed because their workers have either been caught up in the sweep or are afraid to come to work. Families may have lost their primary wage earners, and fear of further ICE action is likely to keep others from going to work or even to school or the grocery store. The Presbytery of Southern Kansas has applied for an emergency grant to assist families in those communities with basic necessities such as food, utility bills, transportation, and child safety. In each of the three communities, congregational leaders will direct us to the agencies that are providing resources to those affected. Our expectation is that we will receive the funds and split them three ways with each community receiving roughly the same amount. The Presbytery Coordinating Team has approved a \$2,000 contribution from our funds. The main objective of our project is to meet the immediate humanitarian needs of families in these towns. If you would like to donate to help these communities, you can send funds to the Presbytery marked “Immigrant assistance.” If you prefer to volunteer or give direct aid, please contact me and I can connect you to our trusted community partners.

Christina@pbysk.org

From the Presbytery Connector

Dear Presbytery of Southern Kansas,

I started watching the new “Little House on the Prairie” series on Netflix. Unlike the television series from the 1970-80’s that was set in Minnesota, this one is set in Independence, KS. (Though it was filmed in Canada.) In one episode of the new series, townspeople come together to build the first church in Independence.

I preached at First Presbyterian of Independence on Sunday, September 27. The stone structure of First Presbyterian with its high ceilings and stained glass is a far cry from the wooden church of the 1800’s depicted in the new series.



Much has changed in Independence since the days of “Little House on the Prairie.” In the years that followed the “Little House” years, population and infrastructure grew. For a season it seemed that small towns had everything they needed and always would. Now, resources like medical care, that once seemed abundant in small towns, are shrinking. The town of Independence has big industry (Textron), and small businesses, a community college, and community spirit, but if you need to see a medical specialist you’re probably driving to Wichita, Tulsa, or Oklahoma City. In addition, small towns like Independence now see a rise in homelessness. There are needs that the city never imagined would be at their doorsteps.

The reduction of resources in small towns is something I see a lot as I travel our presbytery. Our churches feel it too. Our city churches (Wichita and Hutchinson) have the same decline as rural churches, but the cities around them do not feel the sting in the way that our small towns do.

One of the gifts of my work and of the presbytery is getting to connect. No church should feel alone in its challenges, and I encourage you to reach out to me, others on our staff, or those in leadership roles in the presbytery if you want to connect.

I was on the road a lot in September, making visits in Wichita (Trinity and WRCC), Leoti, Tribune, Newton, McPherson, El Dorado, and Winfield. Please let me know if you’d like a visit this fall!

In Christ,
Catherine Neelly Burton