



# The Presbyterian Panel

*Listening to Presbyterians*



## SUMMARY

### Reparations Fall 2003 Special Survey

The Presbyterian Panel consists of three nationally representative samples of groups affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.): members, elders (lay leaders), and ordained ministers. For most analyses, ministers are split into two groups based on current call: *pastors*, serving congregations, and *specialized clergy*, serving elsewhere. New samples are drawn every three years. These pages summarize major findings from the fifth survey completed by the 2003-2005 Panel, initially sampled in the fall of 2002.

#### IN THIS SUMMARY

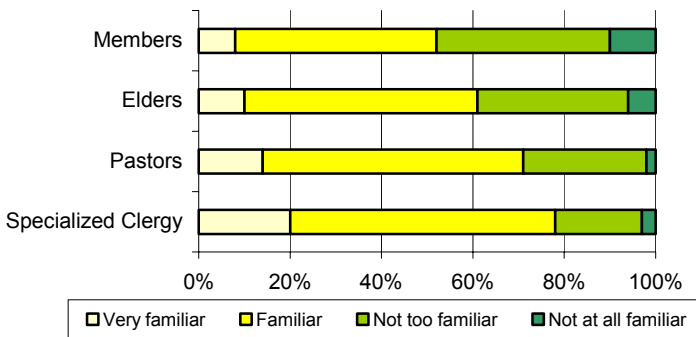
- ✓ *Familiarity with reparations.... p. 1*
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## AWARENESS

### Familiarity with the Issue

- ✓ Most panelists express some familiarity with “the concept of reparations for racial ethnic or other groups that have experienced unjust treatment,” but few (members, 8%; pastors, 14%) are *very familiar*.

**Figure 1. Familiarity with Reparations Concept**



- ✓ More members with a graduate degree are *very familiar* with the concept of reparations (16%) than are those with fewer years of education (5%).

### Awareness of Specific Cases

- ✓ Majorities are aware that the U.S. government paid reparations to “Japanese Americans interned during World War II” (elders, 86%; pastors, 88%) and to “some Native American peoples” (80%; 79%).
- ✓ More pastors (51%) than elders (43%) are aware that German corporations paid reparations to “persons who worked as forced laborers” during World War II.

- ✓ Few know that Canada paid reparations “to First Nation children taken from their families and placed in boarding schools” (elders, 15%; pastors, 24%) or that New Zealand did so to “Maori people for wrongs committed in the late 1800s” (13%; 21%).
- ✓ Half of members (49%), elders (51%), and pastors (54%) report being either *very familiar* or *familiar* “with the proposal to have the federal government make reparations to African Americans as compensation for the slavery of their ancestors.”

### Media and Discussion

- ✓ In the previous year, majorities report reading at least one “newspaper or magazine article” on reparations (members, 71%; specialized clergy, 72%) or seeing at least one “television feature or news story” on the topic (57%; 54%).
- ✓ Majorities report having “been involved in a conversation or discussion” on reparations in the year prior to the survey (elders, 55%), but most had had only one or two such conversations (34%).

### Church Awareness

- ✓ One in nine members and elders and one in 20 pastors report having “heard or preached a sermon” on reparations in the year prior to the survey.
- ✓ Around one in ten members (7%) and elders (11%) and 29% of both minister groups report being aware of the General Assembly Task Force on Reparations.

**Definitions**

- ✓ Presented a list of nine terms and asked which one “does the *best* job of capturing the meaning of ‘reparations’ as you understand it,” a large majority in each Panel group selected one of these three:
  - Making amends (elders, 28%; pastors, 20%)
  - Providing compensation (30%; 23%)
  - Repairing wrongs (22%; 25%)
- ✓ Only one other term, *seeking justice*, was chosen by more than 10% in any group (pastors, 12%; specialized clergy, 17%).

**Racial Reconciliation**

- ✓ A majority in every Panel group selected *the task is far from accomplished, but much work has been done* when asked “how far would you say the United States has come toward achieving racial reconciliation” (members, 61%; elders, 64%; pastors, 68%; specialized clergy, 56%).
- ✓ Among ministers, the option chosen by most of the rest is *the task is far from accomplished, although some work has been done* (pastors, 24%; specialized clergy, 32%). Laity are more divided between that option (members, 14%; elders, 15%) and another one: *the task is largely accomplished* (19%; 16%).

**Racial Reparations**

- ✓ Large majorities (elders, 86%; specialized clergy, 60%) believe that the federal government *should not* “pay money to African Americans whose ancestors were slaves as compensation for that slavery.”

**Personal Importance of Reparations Issue**

- ✓ Fewer than one in ten panelists report that the subject of reparations is *very important* “to you, personally” (members, 6%; pastors, 5%). A third report the subject to be *important* (30%; 33%).
- ✓ Overall, a majority in every group reports reparations to be *not too important* or *not at all important* (52%; 52%) to them, personally.

**PC(USA) Resources & Policy Statements**

- ✓ A majority of members (57%), elders, (62%), and pastors (52%) respond *no, probably not* or *no, definitely not* when asked, “would you like the PC(USA) to develop discussion resources for congregations on reparations?”
- ✓ More panelists oppose than support the idea of the General Assembly taking “a stand or issuing a policy statement on reparations” as regards blacks, Asians, Native Americans, and Mexican Americans.

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	Members	Elders	Ordained Ministers
Number of surveys mailed .....	1,035	1,271	1,364
Number returned .....	525	749	873‡
Response rate .....	47%	57%	61%

‡Of the 873 returned surveys, 600 came from pastors and 273 from specialized clergy.

This survey was initially mailed in September 2003, and returns were accepted through early December 2003. Results are subject to sampling and other errors. Small differences should be interpreted cautiously. As a general rule, differences of less than 8% between samples are not statistically meaningful.

**For more numbers and interpretation** of the Fall 2003 Special Presbyterian Panel results, a longer report with additional charts is available for \$10. Contact PDS (1-800-524-2612) and order PDS# 65100-03280. It includes an appendix with percentage responses to each survey question separately for members, elders, pastors, and specialized clergy.

**For PC(USA) resources on reparations**, contact Mark Koenig (888-728-7228 ext. 5936; mkoenig@ctr.pcusa.org).

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