



# The Presbyterian Panel

*Listening to Presbyterians*



ANNIVERSARY

**REPORT**

## COMMUNICATIONS ACROSS THE CHURCH—THE MAY 1998 SURVEY

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Join Us in Celebrating 1998 as the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Presbyterian Panel

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## Overview

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 analysis, split into two groups based on current call: *pastors*, serving in a congregation, and *specialized clergy*, serving elsewhere). New samples are drawn every three years.

These pages summarize major findings from the seventh survey completed by the 1997-1999 Panel, mailed in May 1999. The first half uses text and graphics to highlight important and useful findings. An appendix follows with comparative tables that display the percentage distribution of responses to every question for each of the four Panel groups.

Response rates for this survey are: members, 48%; elders, 54%; ordained ministers, 65%. Results are subject to sampling and other errors. As a general rule, differences of less than 6% are not statistically meaningful.

In this report, the term *median* refers to the middle number in an ordered distribution. For example, the median age for a group of people aged 12, 21, 28, 35, and 64 years would be 28 years. The term *mean* refers to the mathematical average of the values in a distribution; in the example, the mean age would be calculated as:  $(12+21+28+35+64)/5$ , or 32 years.

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- Author Note:** John P. Marcum, Administrator of the Presbyterian Panel, wrote this report and was assisted in this study by the other staff members of the office of Research Services.
- Staff of Research Services:** Keith Wulff, Coordinator; Louella Aker; Deborah Bruce; Charlene Briggs; Sarahjoy Crewe, John Marcum; Amy Noh; Ida Smith-Williams; Cynthia Woolever.
- Sponsor:** The Office of Communication, Executive Director's Office, General Assembly Council, requested this survey. For more information on the Communication Office and its services and publications, contact Gary Luhr at 502-569-5515.
- Additional Copies:** Additional copies of this *Report* may be purchased for \$5 from PDS—call 1-800-524-2612 and request item number 65100-98256. Copies of a four-page *Summary* of results are available for \$1.25 each directly from Research Services. Call for information on quantity discounts (800-469-6390).
- Panel on the Web:** A catalogue of Panel topics, and *Summaries* of recent surveys, are available on-line at the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) web site: <<http://www.pcusa.org>>. Use the pull-down quick menu to select *Presbyterian Panel*. Or select *Research Services* to learn more about our work.
- Panel by Fax:** *Summaries* of recent surveys are also available through PresbyFax, the denomination's fax-on-demand service. Call 502-569-8850 from your fax machine and listen to the menu.
- Panel Data Sets:** Panel data sets may be accessed for further research through the American Religion Data Archive at Purdue University. Contact them at 765-494-0081 (phone) or 765-496-1476 (fax), or visit their Web site: <[www.arda.tm](http://www.arda.tm)>.

## Highlights

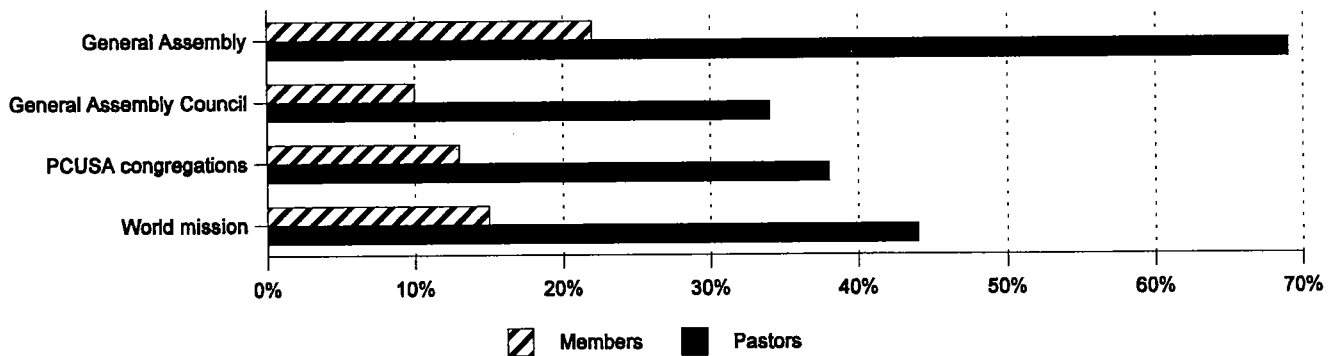
- ✓ A majority of members and elders and almost all clergy are interested in obtaining information about the General Assembly. Interest in the General Assembly Council and other national boards is less, especially among the laity. Level of interest in information about these entities has changed little since 1994, with the exception of national boards: pastors and other clergy show more interest now than then.
- ✓ A majority in every sample has an interest in obtaining information on such topics as: PCUSA congregations, colleges, and seminaries; Christian mission; Presbyterians in the news; resources available from, and programs of, the PCUSA. Interest is also relatively high in obtaining information on spiritual growth and on social issues as viewed from a Christian perspective.
- ✓ Most panelists currently receive *about the right amount* of information about their own congregations and presbyteries, but of those who want change, more want additional information than want less information.
- ✓ Panelists in every sample show a preference for print media as a way to obtain information about the PCUSA, with interest in computer-based communication not far behind and growing.
- ✓ Of possible PCUSA-produced television and radio programs, members show more interest in those that explore social issues or family values than those that profile the PCUSA.
- ✓ A third of members, four in ten elders, six in ten specialized clergy, and seven in ten pastors are *very interested* or *interested* in obtaining information about the church via the Internet.
- ✓ Among elders, the Presbyterian media used most in the prior year include *Presbyterians Today*, *The Presbyterian Layman*, and *HORIZONS*. Among pastors, the top three are *News Briefs*, *Presbyterians Today*, and *The Presbyterian Outlook*. Among the least used media are PresbyFax, Voiceline, and “Passages.”
- ✓ Nine in ten members, three in four elders, one-half of specialized clergy, and one-third of pastors are either *not familiar* with the new general-interest periodical, *Presbyterians—Being Faithful to Jesus Christ*, or they have *never* read it.
- ✓ Ratings of the *accuracy and reliability* of several Presbyterian periodicals have changed little in the last decade, with *Presbyterians Today* ranking the highest in all samples in both 1998 and 1989.
- ✓ Denominational periodicals generally have their highest readership rates among older panelists. Theologically-conservative panelists are more likely to be readers of *The Presbyterian Layman* than are theological moderates or liberals.
- ✓ Awareness of the “National Cooperative Media Campaign” is very low, even among clergy.
- ✓ Few members but three-fourths of pastors and two-thirds of specialized clergy attempted to contact a staff person or office in Louisville in the year prior to the survey. Most members and elders who did so made only one such contact, and among clergy, the average (median) was 5. Most people who contacted Louisville were satisfied with the experience, and satisfaction levels had improved, especially among pastors and specialized clergy, since 1994.

## WHAT PRESBYTERIANS WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE CHURCH

### The National Church

- ✓ A majority of panelists in every sample want “to obtain information about the General Assembly.” This includes 22% of members, 29% of elders, 69% of pastors, and 67% of specialized clergy who *definitely* want to obtain such information.
- ✓ Only 9% of members, 5% of elders, less than 0.5% of pastors, and 1% of other clergy *definitely do not* want “to obtain information about the General Assembly.”
- ✓ Around one-third of pastors and other clergy, and one in ten members and elders, *definitely* want “to obtain information about the General Assembly Council.” Even fewer panelists (members, 4%; pastors, 19%) *definitely* want “to obtain information about divisions, boards, and committees of the national church.”
- ✓ Most panelists want to obtain information about “resources available from the national church,” including 19% of elders and 48% of pastors who *definitely* want such information.

**Figure 1**  
Percent Who Definitely Want to Obtain Information About Each



### Individuals, Congregations, and Middle Governing Bodies

- ✓ A majority of members (52%), 46% of elders, and 40% of pastors do *not* (either *definitely* or *probably*) want to obtain information about “synods and presbyteries.”
- ✓ Three-fourths of pastors and other clergy, but only one in five members and elders, *definitely* or *probably* want information on “deaths, retirements, and new positions of ministers of the Word and Sacrament.”
- ✓ Majorities of panelists, ranging from 71% of members to 84% of pastors, *definitely* or *probably* want to obtain information on “Presbyterians who are in the news.”
- ✓ Opinion polls receive a mixed response. About as many members and elders want as do not want to obtain “opinions from church members.” Pastors are a bit more supportive, with 17% *definitely* and 45% *probably* wanting members’ opinions. Slightly higher levels of support among both laity and clergy is found for obtaining “opinion pieces, such as columns and editorials, from church leaders.”
- ✓ Most panelists are at least somewhat interested in obtaining news about Presbyterian congregations, including 16% of elders and 38% of pastors who *definitely* want such information. A similar level of interest is expressed for “news about Presbyterian and other Christian mission around the world.”

## WHAT PRESBYTERIANS WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE CHURCH

### Faith and Theology

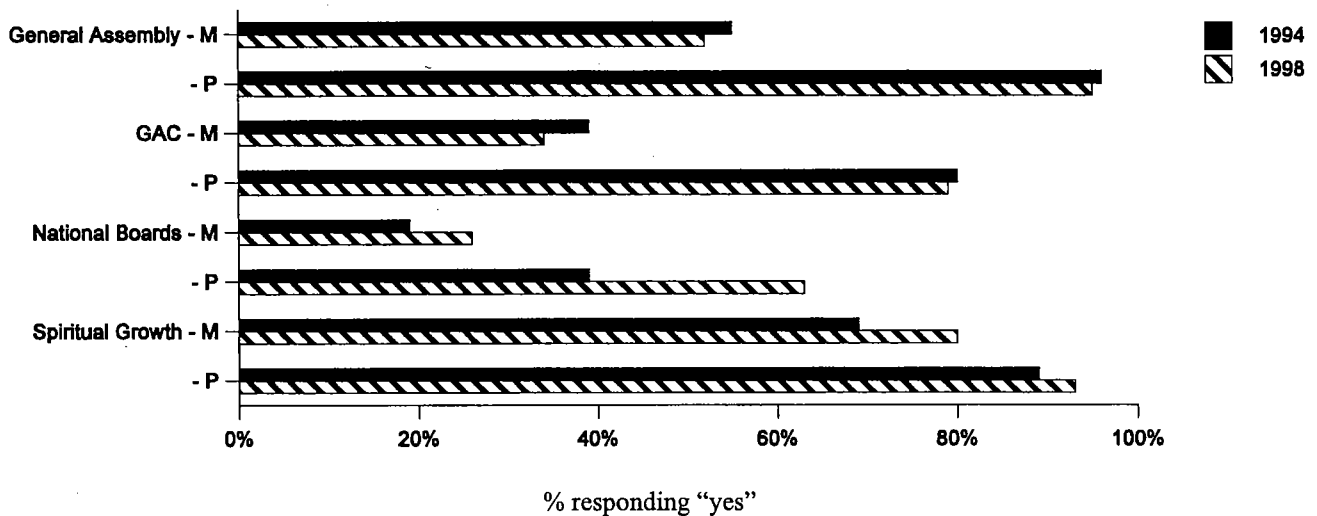
- ✓ Interest is relatively high in obtaining “information about Presbyterian beliefs.” From 29% (members) to 40% (pastors) *definitely* want to obtain such information, and most of the rest (50% of members, 44% of pastors) *probably* want to obtain it.
- ✓ Interest is high in obtaining “articles on spirituality/growth in faith.” 30% of members and 60% of pastors *definitely* want to obtain this type of information, and almost all others *probably* want to obtain it (e.g., 50% of members, 33% of pastors).

### Changes Since 1994

The Panel distributed a similar survey on communications four years earlier, in May 1994. That survey also assessed interest in receiving various types of information, with many of the same specific items. A comparison reveals relatively few changes. For example, there was no significant change in any sample in reported interest in obtaining information about the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council, PCUSA colleges and theological institutions, Christian mission around the world, and life and career transitions among ministers. However, there were *increases in interest in:*

- ✓ Obtaining information about national boards and committees, particularly among pastors and other clergy
- ✓ Obtaining information about ecumenical groups, but only among the clergy
- ✓ “Stories/news about Presbyterian congregations”
- ✓ “Articles on spirituality/growth in faith”

**Figure 2**  
**Information Interests: Comparing 1994 and 1998**



M = Members

P = Pastors

## WHAT PRESBYTERIANS WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE CHURCH

### Comparing Information Desires

To more easily discern the *relative* interest in obtaining more of various kinds of information, responses to Q1 (see Appendix) were recoded (yes, definitely = 4; yes, probably = 2; no opinion = 0; no, probably not = -2; no, definitely not = -4), then summed and averaged. Averages above zero can be interpreted as indicating topics that a plurality of Presbyterians want information on, with the higher the score, the greater the amount of interest. As the table shows, members express the most enthusiasm for materials directly applicable to their own faith journeys or those that describe the faith journeys of others. Information about the larger Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—with the exception of the General Assembly itself—tends to rank much lower on the interest hierarchy.

Pastors reveal considerably more interest than members in obtaining each type of information, but the overall pattern of scores is generally similar. Where noticeable differences are found, the explanation seems obvious. For example, pastors are more interested in obtaining information about other ministers than members are. It is worth noting that, in a relative sense, outside of the General Assembly, neither members nor pastors are very interested in deliberations of the national or regional church.

**Table 1**  
**Relative Interest of Members and Pastors in Obtaining Various Types of Information on Presbyterians and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

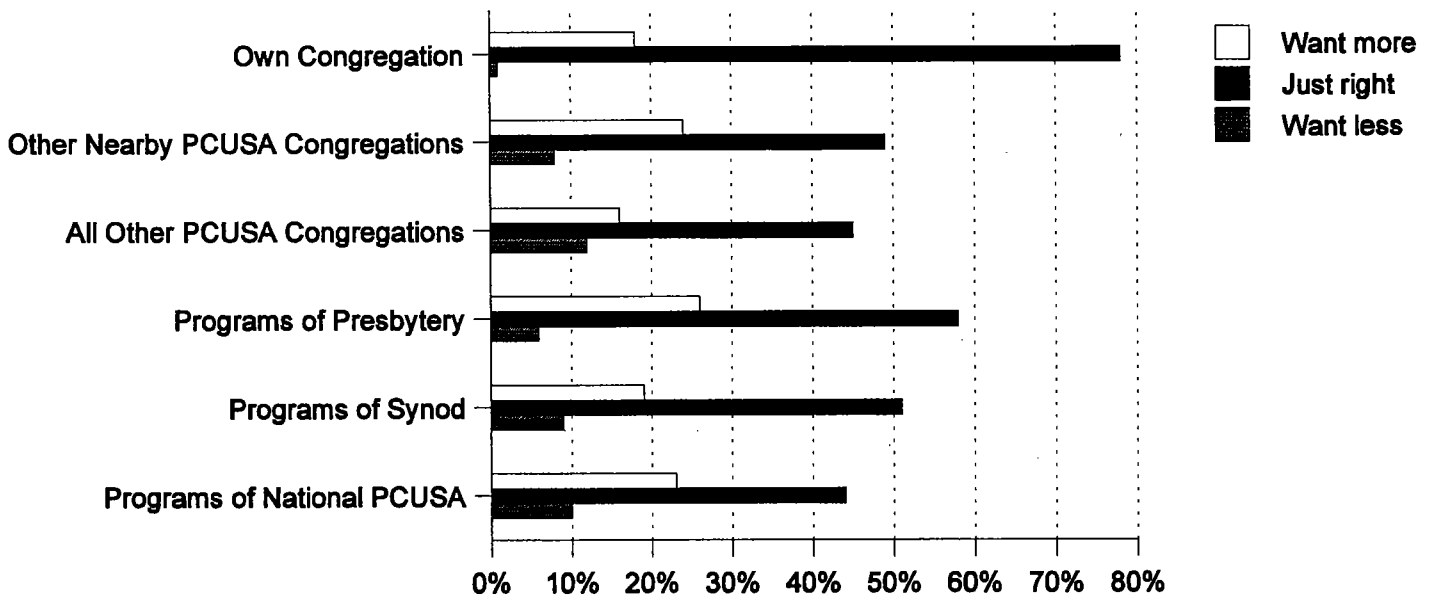
Type of Information wanted:	Members		Pastors	
	Rank	Score	Rank	Score
articles on spirituality/growth in faith	1	1.78	2	2.89
information about Presbyterian beliefs	2	1.70	8	2.14
discussions of current social issues from a theological perspective	3	1.38	5	2.46
human interest stories about Presbyterians who are in the news	4	1.16	10	2.04
stories/news about Presbyterian and other Christian mission around the world	5	1.05	3	2.57
stories/news about Presbyterian congregations	6	1.04	6	2.39
information about programs of the PCUSA	7	0.54	9	2.10
information about resources available from the national church	8	0.46	4	2.52
General Assembly	9	0.42	1	3.19
opinion pieces from church leaders	10	0.31	15	0.94
information about the PCUSA's financial status	11	0.17	13	1.63
opinions from church members	12	0.10	18	0.73
stories/news about PCUSA colleges	13	0.05	17	0.80
information about churchwide events	14	-0.00	7	2.25
information about synods and presbyteries	15	-0.33	19	0.57
stories/news about Presbyterian theological institutions	16	-0.46	14	1.41
General Assembly Council (GAC)	17	-0.49	12	1.81
ecumenical groups (e.g., NCC/WCC)	18	-0.78	20	0.44
divisions, boards, and committees of the national church	19	-0.94	16	0.88
announcements of deaths, retirements, and new positions of ministers	20	-1.39	11	1.97

## WHAT PRESBYTERIANS WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE CHURCH

### Current Communication: Too Little, Too Much, Just Right?

- ✓ Majorities of panelists in every sample *currently receive [the] right amount* of information about their own congregation (e.g., elders, 82%; pastors 79%) and about “programs and activities of your presbytery” (elders, 60%; pastors, 77%).
- ✓ For each of the six information areas listed in Q2 (see Appendix),
  - in every sample more panelists indicated that they *currently receive [the] right amount* of information than either *want more* or *want less* information
  - among panelists who want change, in almost all instances the number of *want more* responses is greater—often very much greater—than the number of *want less* responses (the exception is found among both clergy samples for the topic “programs and activities of your synod”: while 15% of pastors and 13% of specialized clergy *want more* information, 22% and 20%, respectively, *want less*).
  - lay panelists and clergy panelists are broadly similar in their assessment of the amount of current information they receive about various church topics, with a few more members and elders than clergy responding *not sure* on most topics and a few more pastors and specialized clergy than laity responding *currently receive [the] right amount*.

**Figure 3**  
Members’ Assessment of Amount of Information Currently Received on Selected Topics



## PREFERRED COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA

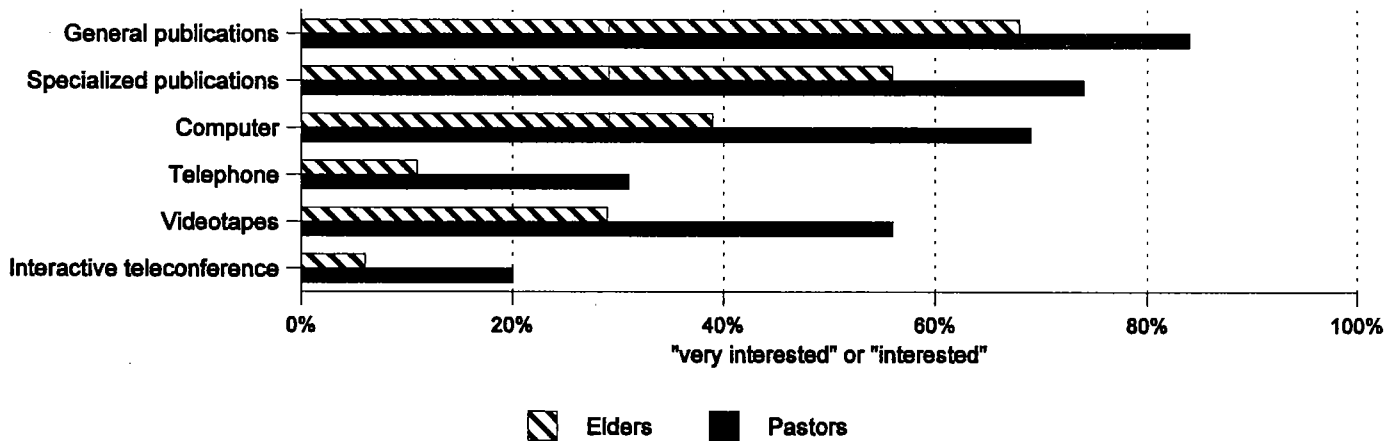
### Print Publications

- ✓ To obtain information about the church, panelists in every sample express the most support for print media. Large majorities in every sample, ranging from 68% of members to 84% of pastors, are either *very interested* or *interested* in obtaining church information “through general-interest publications.”
- ✓ Majorities, ranging from 53% (members) to 74% (pastors), are *interested/very interested* in obtaining church information via “one or more special-interest publications.”

### Audio and Video

- ✓ Around one in five (members, elders, specialized clergy) or one in four (pastors) have some interest in obtaining church information “through audiotapes.” Interest is higher for videotapes, for example, 29% of members and 56% of pastors express some interest in obtaining church information through this medium.
- ✓ Few pastors (20%) or specialized clergy (17%) and even fewer members (7%) and elders (6%) have an interest in obtaining church information “via interactive teleconference.”
- ✓ Around one in ten members and elders, one in six specialized clergy, and one in three pastors are *interested/very interested* in obtaining church news “by telephone from a general information source, such as PresbyTel.”

**Figure 4**  
**How Presbyterians Want to Receive Information about the PCUSA**



- ✓ Members and elders would be most likely “to listen to or watch” the following types of PCUSA-produced programming (combined *very likely* and *likely* responses in parentheses):
  - “entertainment program emphasizing faith and family values” (members, 68%; elders, 65%)
  - “documentaries about social issues and concerns” (members, 65%; elders, 67%)
  - “family-focused programs” (both 59%)
  - “programs on spirituality” (members, 57%; elders, 56%)
  - “news programs of Christians around the world” (members, 52%; elders, 51%)



## PREFERRED COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA

### Who Would Watch What?

Interest in radio and television programming produced by the PCUSA varies significantly both by program content and characteristics of panelists. Table 2 below shows, by categories of social and religious characteristics, the percentage of members who indicate that they would be *very likely* or *likely* to watch and/or listen to specific types of programs. Of the four types of programs shown in the table, the greatest interest overall is found for "entertainment programs emphasizing faith and family values" and for "documentaries about social issues and concerns." This finding parallels the results for Q1, where panelists showed greater interest in obtaining information in those areas directly related to their own spiritual lives. Similarly, the reason so few members would likely watch or listen to programs aimed at children is that few of them have children present in the home; the results by age make this clear, as only among the youngest members (under age 40) is interest in youth programs found to be high. Age also is related to interest in programs about the PCUSA, with relatively few younger members showing any interest.

Worship attendance is positively related to likelihood of watching and/or listening to each type of program, particularly at the low extreme: infrequent attenders show *relatively* less interest in each of the program types. Education also has a consistent effect, so that members with graduate degrees express much less interest in church-produced programs of whatever type than do those with fewer years of formal schooling.

**Table 2**  
**Interest in PCUSA-Produced Radio/TV Programming:**  
**Responses of Members by Categories of Social and Religious Characteristics**

Percent Responding *Very Likely* or *Likely* to Listen/Watch:

	Programs Highlighting PCUSA Activities	Christian Education Programs for Children/Youth	Documentaries on Social Issues	Entertainment Emphasizing Faith and Family Values
<b>Sex</b>				
Female	46%	45%	69%	72%
Male	39%	32%	57%	60%
<b>Age</b>				
<40	29%	65%	60%	67%
40-54	39%	39%	71%	64%
55-69	47%	31%	65%	64%
70+	56%	36%	61%	76%
<b>Worship Attendance</b>				
Every week	55%	44%	70%	76%
Nearly every week	47%	43%	67%	74%
2-3 times a month	33%	39%	55%	57%
Once a month or less	22%	25%	57%	47%
<b>Education</b>				
H.S. graduate or less	45%	46%	51%	76%
Some college	50%	42%	68%	80%
College graduate	39%	40%	69%	65%
Graduate degree	37%	31%	59%	52%
<b>Theological Stance</b>				
Conservative	50%	42%	64%	77%
Moderate	43%	41%	66%	68%
Liberal	24%	31%	63%	41%
<b>Total</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>68%</b>

## PREFERRED COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA

### Computers and the Internet

- ✓ Majorities of all panelists believe it to be *very important* or *important* for the PCUSA to provide an Internet web site and that the denomination support a “computer-based . . . conferencing system,” such as PresbyNet.
- ✓ A third of members, four in ten elders, six in ten specialized clergy, and seven in ten pastors are *very interested* or *interested* in obtaining church information via the Internet—even though only 17% of members, 25% of elders, 56% of specialized clergy, and 64% of pastors currently use a computer “to access information . . . from PresbyNet or the Internet.” Indeed, around one-half of members who *never* access information through a computer believe it is either *very important* or *important* for the PCUSA to maintain a computer-based conferencing system *and* an Internet web site.
- ✓ Among the subset of panelists who currently use PresbyNet or access the Internet:
  - 23% of members, 30% of elders, 42% of specialized clergy, and 48% of pastors are *very interested* or *generally interested* in “regularly-scheduled live ‘chat rooms’” involving PCUSA leaders
  - 40% of members, 49% of elders, 69% of pastors, and 70% of specialized clergy are *very interested* or *generally interested* in receiving denominational periodicals (e.g., *Presbyterians Today*, *Monday Morning*) via on-line distribution.
- ✓ Few members or elders (2%), but more pastors (21%) and other clergy (16%), have used the PCUSA’s World Wide Web site *often* in the last year. Half of members (59%) and elders (49%) are *not familiar* with the site.

### Growing Interest in Computer-Based Communication

The Internet was so obscure in early 1994 that the previous Panel survey on communications asked no questions about it. The computer focus then was on the concept of a Presbyterian-run computer network, as represented by PresbyNet. Then, 35% of members and 47% of pastors thought it was either an *excellent* or *good idea* for the PCUSA to sponsor a “computer network for electronic mail and conferencing.” When this question was repeated in 1998, 43% of members and 67% of pastors gave an *excellent* or *good* response. At the other end of the spectrum, percentages who thought such a network was a *poor* idea dropped from 15% to 6% among members and from 16% to 6% among pastors.

Even more dramatic is the increase in support for a computer network when that option competes with print and video (see Table 3). In 1994, almost one-half of members and 37% of pastors opted for a “journal/magazine consisting largely of an exchange of letters” when asked, “If the PC(USA) could afford to support only one type of system or publication for information sharing . . . which *one* . . . would *you personally* prefer?” As interest in this format declined, it increased for a computer network, especially among both groups of clergy. Elders showed the least interest in a computer network in 1994; while they, like the other groups, showed a sizable drop in interest in a “magazine of letters,” most of their shift went to a “ministry of dialogue”—a program to send national staff around the country to speak to Presbyterian groups.

**Table 3**  
**Changes in Personal Preferences for PCUSA Information-Sharing Options**

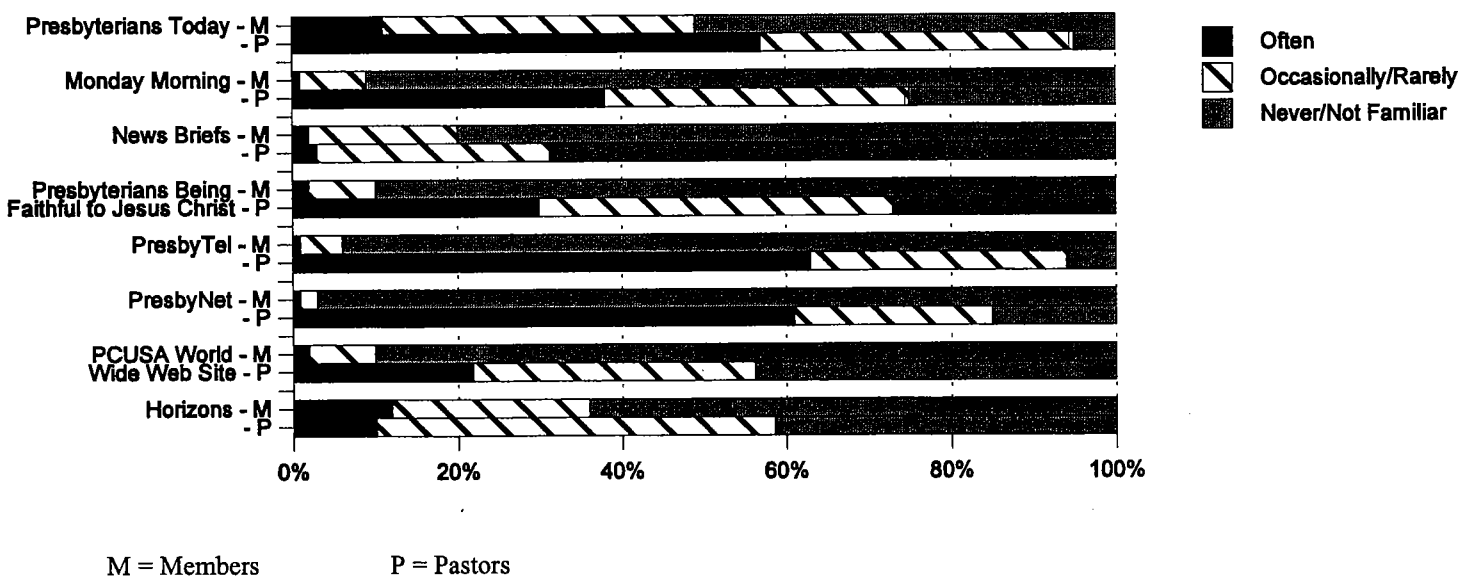
	Members		Elders		Pastors		Specialized Clergy	
	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998
magazine of letters	47%	37%	46%	33%	37%	27%	32%	24%
computer network	17%	27%	18%	22%	21%	38%	27%	39%
video conferences	13%	9%	11%	9%	12%	6%	14%	7%
visits by national staff	23%	27%	25%	35%	29%	29%	26%	28%

## USING AND EVALUATING PRESBYTERIAN MEDIA

### Use of Media

- ✓ Of official PCUSA media, only *Presbyterians Today* is familiar to a majority of members. Two-thirds of members express some knowledge of this magazine, including 11% who read it *often* and 22% who read it *occasionally*. Nine in ten elders report some familiarity with *Presbyterians Today*, including 25% who read it *often* and 32% who read it *occasionally*.
- ✓ Almost all pastors are familiar with the various official PCUSA media listed on the survey. The greatest familiarity is reported for *News Briefs*, which 68% of pastors (and 38% of specialized clergy) read *often*. A majority of pastors, 57%, also *often* read *Presbyterians Today*.
- ✓ The new occasional periodical, *Presbyterians—Being Faithful to Jesus Christ*, is one of the less familiar official print publications. Majorities of members (64%) and elders (53%) are *not familiar* with it. About one-half of pastors report reading it either *often* (27%) or *occasionally* (26%), but 17% of pastors are *not familiar* with it.
- ✓ Majorities of members (64%) and elders (55%) are *not familiar* with PresbyTel, the PCUSA’s “1-800” toll-free information telephone line. Only 4% of members and 7% of elders report contacting PresbyTel in the last year. By contrast, only 5% of pastors are *not familiar* with PresbyTel, and a majority (54%) have used the service in the last year, including 4% who have used it *often* and 17% who have used it *occasionally*.
- ✓ Around a quarter of pastors and specialized clergy use PresbyNet with some regularity, including 15% and 14%, respectively, who report using it *often*. Majorities of members and elders are *not familiar* with PresbyNet.
- ✓ Around one in ten members and elders and four in ten pastors and specialized clergy report accessing the PCUSA’s World Wide Web site in the last year. Overall, a majority of pastors, and 49% of specialized clergy, report accessing the site at least once. A majority of members (59%) and 49% of elders are not aware that the denomination has a web site.

**Figure 5**  
Use of PCUSA Media in Last Year by Members and Pastors



## USING AND EVALUATING PRESBYTERIAN MEDIA

- ✓ Among Presbyterian-oriented (but independent) print publications, both *The Presbyterian Layman* and *Presbyterian Outlook* are widely read:
  - Around a quarter of members and four in ten elders read *The Layman* at least *occasionally*, although 44% and 27%, respectively, are *not familiar* with this periodical. Around a half of pastors read *The Layman* either *often* (27%) or *occasionally* (26%), and less than 0.5% are *not familiar* with it.
  - Most members (52%) and many elders (36%) are *not familiar* with *Presbyterian Outlook*, although 4% and 8%, respectively, read it *often*, and 9% and 18%, *occasionally*. Only 1% of pastors are *not familiar* with *Outlook*; 54% read it *often* and 21%, *occasionally*. A majority of specialized clergy read it either *often* (38%) or *occasionally* (24%).

### Relative Use of Presbyterian Media

To sum up the relative usage of the various types of Presbyterian media, we calculated “mean use scores” based on: *often* = 4; *occasionally* = 2; *rarely* = 1; *never* = 0. The results are displayed below in Table 4. In brief:

- ✓ pastors use *all* Presbyterian media more, on average, than elders do
- ✓ the rankings are broadly similar, with some interesting exceptions, e.g., *HORIZONS* ranks relatively higher among elders (perhaps because women are a much higher proportion of elders than of pastors), and *News Briefs* ranks relatively higher among pastors (perhaps because it is routinely sent to all congregations)
- ✓ PresbyFax is hardly ever used by any panelists, lay or clerical

**Table 4**  
**Relative Use of Presbyterian Media**

	Elders		Pastors	
	Rank	Score	Rank	Score
<i>Presbyterians Today</i>	1	1.85	2	2.94
<i>The Presbyterian Layman</i>	2	1.26	7	1.83
<i>HORIZONS</i>	3	0.83	11	1.10
<i>The Presbyterian Outlook</i>	3	0.83	3	2.73
<i>Assembly in Brief</i>	5	0.61	4	2.25
<i>News Briefs</i>	6	0.55	1	3.21
<i>Presbyterians—Being Faithful to Jesus Christ</i>	7	0.54	8	1.78
<i>General Assembly News Wrap-Up Edition</i>	8	0.52	5	2.32
<i>Presbyterian Headline News</i>	9	0.36	9	1.77
<i>Presbyterian Features</i>	10	0.33	15	0.71
PCUSA World Wide Web site	11	0.30	10	1.38
<i>Monday Morning</i>	12	0.29	6	2.04
“Odyssey”	13	0.28	18	0.42
“Protestant Hour”	14	0.23	19	0.39
<i>Church &amp; Society</i>	15	0.21	14	0.78
PresbyTel On-line	16	0.12	16	0.70
“Passages”	17	0.11	20	0.23
PresbyNet	18	0.09	12	0.95
PresbyTel	19	0.07	13	0.84
Voiceline	20	0.02	17	0.46
PresbyFax	21	0.01	21	0.16

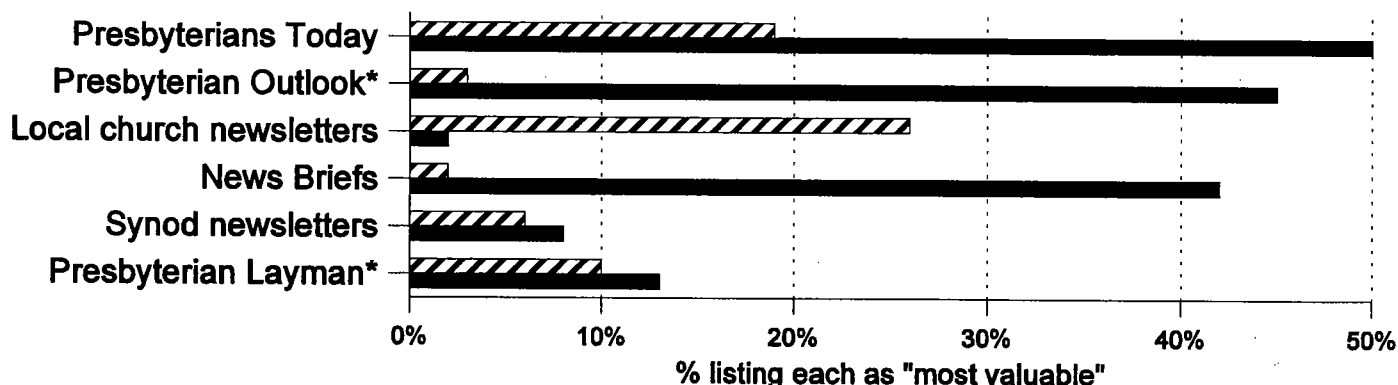
## USING AND EVALUATING PRESBYTERIAN MEDIA

- ✓ Majorities of members and elders are *not familiar* with these broadcast endeavors: “The Protestant Hour” radio program; “Passages” radio series; the “Odyssey” religion cable network. Most pastors and specialized clergy are familiar with these communication tools, but only around one in ten (or less) listen to or watch them either *often* or *occasionally*.

### Best Sources of Information

- ✓ Panelists were asked to list the “three most valuable sources of information about the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” Among pastors,
  - 50% rated *Presbyterians Today* as one of the *most valuable*
  - 45% rated *Presbyterian Outlook* as one of the *most valuable*
  - 42% rated *News Briefs* as one of the *most valuable*
  - 21% rated *Monday Morning* as one of the *most valuable*

**Figure 6**  
**Most-Valuable Church-Oriented Publication**



### Accuracy and Reliability

- ✓ At least one-half of panelists in every sample included *Presbyterians Today* when asked to name the three “*most reliable and accurate* [Presbyterian] sources of information.” Totals ranged from 72% among elders to 50% among specialized clergy. No other source was listed by as many as one-third of members, although *HORIZONS*, with 31%, and *The Presbyterian Layman*, with 28%, both came close. Interestingly, only 6% of pastors and 8% of specialized clergy listed *HORIZONS* among their three choices; 18% and 10%, respectively, listed *The Layman*.
- ✓ The source named by the most pastors as “most accurate and reliable” is *News Briefs*, listed by 62%. *Presbyterians Today* is second, named by 53%. *Presbyterian Outlook*, at 48%, and *Monday Morning*, at 21%, follow. Specialized clergy respond similarly.

**Comparing Accuracy and Reliability Ratings, 1989 - 1998**

In a January 1989 survey on "Communication," the Presbyterian Panel asked about perceptions of the accuracy and reliability of various information sources, from "your pastor" to "local congregation newsletter" to "synod newsletter" to various national periodicals. Five of the latter were also among the options on the 1998 survey question that asked about accuracy and reliability of church media. There are sufficient differences in the questions to make these comparisons "iffy," especially in terms of the actual percentages (in particular: the percentages will tend to be lower overall in 1998, by design, because no individual could rate more than three of them), but the rank order of ratings on these five publications is a useful comparison (see Table 5).

In short, in relative terms there have been few major shifts in the evaluation of on-going national publications over the last decade. Among laity, *Presbyterians Today* is the leader, just as *Presbyterian Survey* was in the late 1980s. Still, *Presbyterians Today* occupies that position more because of the lack of competition than its own dominance, since only a third of members and elders overall rated this periodical as *highly accurate and reliable* in 1998.

Among clergy, *Monday Morning* has dropped in the ratings, undoubtedly in part because of its shift away from denomination-subsidized subscriptions. Whereas once it challenged *Presbyterians Today* and *Presbyterian Outlook* for quality ratings, it is now a distant third. It appears that respect for *The Presbyterian Layman* has increased among pastors, although there is reason to suspect this may be more of an artifact of question design than any sort of real trend.

**Table 5  
Perceived Accuracy and Reliability Rankings of Five PCUSA Periodicals, 1989 and 1998**

1. Lay Samples

	Members				Elders			
	1989*		1998**		1989*		1998**	
	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%
<i>Presbyterians Today [Survey]</i>	1	18%	1	16%	1	30%	1	33%
<i>Monday Morning</i>	5	2%	5	1%	5	2%	5	2%
<i>HORIZONS</i>	3	6%	2	9%	3	9%	3	9%
<i>The Presbyterian Layman***</i>	2	8%	2	9%	2	10%	2	3%
<i>The Presbyterian Outlook***</i>	3	6%	4	3%	3	9%	4	8%

2. Clerical Samples

	Pastors				Specialized Clergy			
	1989*		1998**		1989*		1998**	
	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%
<i>Presbyterians Today [Survey]</i>	1	53%	1	47%	1	42%	1	36%
<i>Monday Morning</i>	3	48%	3	17%	2	41%	3	18%
<i>HORIZONS</i>	4	15%	5	5%	4	11%	5	6%
<i>The Presbyterian Layman***</i>	5	7%	4	16%	5	5%	4	7%
<i>The Presbyterian Outlook***</i>	2	51%	2	43%	2	41%	2	34%

\* % in 1989 is percent of total who indicated both that they *rely on this news source* and who rated it as *highly accurate and reliable*.

\*\* % in 1998 is percent of total who indicated (in Q10) that they *often or occasionally* read each publication and who listed it (Q11) as one of the three "*most accurate and reliable* sources of information [about the PCUSA]."

\*\*\* independently published

## USING AND EVALUATING PRESBYTERIAN MEDIA

### Comparing Readers: *Presbyterians Today*, *Monday Morning*, *News Briefs*, *The Presbyterian Layman*, and *The Presbyterian Outlook*

How similar or different are the readers of various Presbyterian publications? The table provides a partial answer among members and pastors for five of the more general periodicals, three sponsored by the PCUSA (*Presbyterians Today*, *Monday Morning*, and *News Briefs*), and two independent ones, *The Presbyterian Layman* and *The Presbyterian Outlook*.

**Members.** Few younger members (under age 40) read any of the three periodicals, but readership increases modestly with age for *Presbyterians Today* and *The Layman*. Relatively more women than men read *Presbyterians Today*. Readership rates for all three periodicals are greater among regular than among infrequent church attenders. *The Layman* is read by one in five conservative members, but by only one in 20 moderate and one in 30 liberal members. Unlike liberal pastors, liberal members are less likely than their conservative counterparts to read *Presbyterians Today*. For *Presbyterian Outlook*, the highest readership rates are found among theological moderates.

**Pastors.** Relatively more older than younger pastors read each of the periodicals, and relatively more men than women read each one—especially *News Briefs* and *The Presbyterian Layman*. Theological orientation also shows a clear pattern: fewer conservative than moderate or liberal pastors read the official periodicals, while more conservative than moderate or liberal pastors read *The Layman*.

**Table 6**  
**Who Reads Presbyterian Periodicals Often by Other Social and Religious Characteristics:  
Members and Pastors**

	<i>Presbyterians Today</i>		<i>Presbyterian Layman*</i>		<i>Presbyterian Outlook*</i>		<i>Monday Morning</i> Pastors Only	<i>News Briefs</i>	
	M	P	M	P	M	P			
<b>Percent Who Read Each Periodical Often</b>									
<b>Gender</b>									
Female	14%	54%	10%	13%	4%	48%	31%	56%	
Male	6%	58%	11%	30%	2%	55%	39%	70%	
<b>Age</b>									
<40	1%	42%	2%	24%	2%	52%	27%	58%	
40-49	12%	57%	11%	26%	4%	57%	31%	64%	
50-59	12%	60%	12%	28%	4%	52%	40%	74%	
60+	17%	66%	15%	34%	4%	53%	57%	75%	
<b>Education</b>									
H.S. graduate or less	13%	—	9%	—	3%	—	—	—	
Some college	13%	—	12%	—	2%	—	—	—	
College graduate	5%	—	11%	—	4%	—	—	—	
Graduate degree	16%	—	7%	—	5%	—	—	—	
<b>Worship Attendance</b>									
Weekly	17%	—	16%	—	8%	—	—	—	
Nearly Every Week	11%	—	12%	—	3%	—	—	—	
2-3 times a month	10%	—	4%	—	2%	—	—	—	
Once a month or less	5%	—	2%	—	—	—	—	—	
<b>Theological Stance</b>									
Conservative	13%	46%	20%	51%	4%	47%	30%	59%	
Moderate	12%	63%	5%	23%	4%	61%	41%	71%	
Liberal	7%	59%	3%	10%	3%	49%	40%	71%	

\* independently published

## OTHER COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES

### Media Ads and Notices

- ✓ Very few members or elders (around 5% of both groups) are at all familiar with the “National Cooperative Media Campaign” (*Stop in and Find Out*) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Relatively few clergy also indicate any awareness: 48% of pastors and 63% of specialized clergy responded *not at all familiar* when asked about this campaign. (Another 14% and 20%, respectively, responded *don't know*.)
- ✓ A majority of pastors would be interested in “PC(USA)-produced print, TV, or radio advertisements that your church could purchase for a nominal amount and then pay to use” in local media, including 21% who are *very interested* and 31% who are *generally interested*. Among elders, 6% are *very interested* and 15%, *generally interested*.

### Teleconferences

- ✓ Panelists show modest interest in future teleconferences that permit “participants, watching from downlink sites around the country, . . . to ask questions of church leaders.” The combined *very interested* and *interested* responses total 19% among members, 21% among elders, 25% among pastors, and 23% among specialized clergy.
- ✓ Were they to participate in a future teleconference, more panelists would want to do so “by home computer or video device,” which permits participation from almost any location, than “by satellite or video conferences, which requires [travel] to a special site.” Among pastors, 8% prefer the satellite method, while 39% prefer home computer. Another 36% have *no preference*, and 18% *don't know*.
- ✓ Around one-third in every sample believe that teleconferences are either *very valuable* or *generally valuable* “as a medium for teaching or training.” A large number, ranging from 42% of members to 20% of pastors, respond *don't know*.

### Contacting Louisville

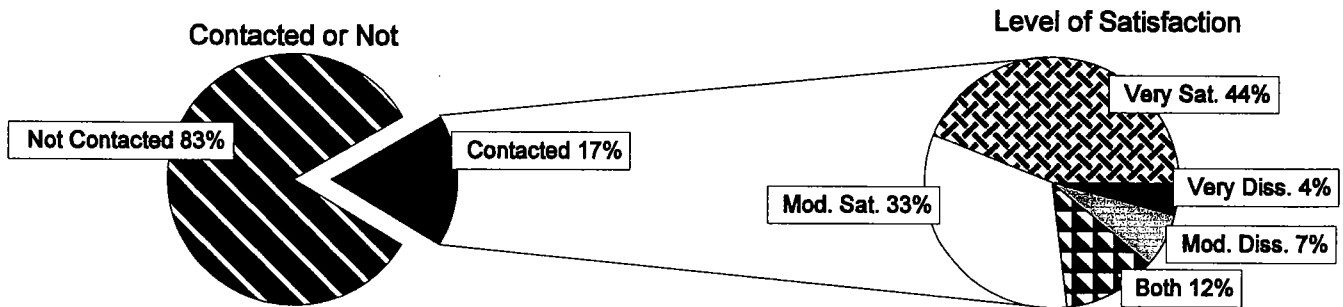
- ✓ Most pastors (80%) and specialized clergy (60%) report at least one occasion in the last year when they tried “to get in touch with a national church office or staff member in Louisville.” Relatively fewer members (8%) and elders (17%) report such contact. Most panelists who tried to contact national church offices did so only a few times; no member or elder attempted more than five contacts, and a majority of pastors (60%) and specialized clergy (62%) attempted five or fewer contacts. A few in both samples, however—3% of pastors, 7% of specialized clergy—attempted 20 or more contacts.
- ✓ Of panelists who attempted to contact staff in Louisville, more than one-half of members and more than four in ten in the other samples report they are *very satisfied* with their experience(s). Overall, only around one in ten panelists expressed dissatisfaction with their contacts.



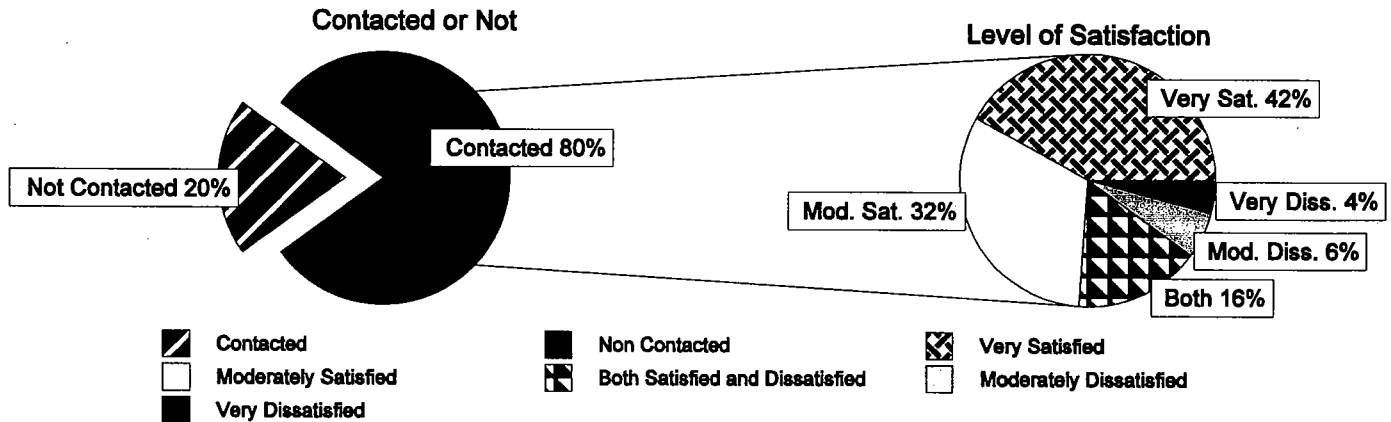
OTHER COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES

Figure 7  
Satisfaction with Attempts to Contact Louisville

Elders



Pastors



- ✓ Among the minority of panelists who reported an unsatisfactory experience while attempting to reach a national church office, the most common complaints centered on inability to make an appropriate contact. Among pastors, for example, 29% were unhappy that they reached voice mail, 28% thought their calls were returned too slowly, and 19% were not able to reach (or had difficulty in reaching) the appropriate person.
- ✓ The percentage of members who had attempted to contact someone in Louisville was somewhat greater among those at older ages and among those with more years of formal education. However, among members, women were no more likely than men to attempt to contact someone in Louisville, and theological conservatives were no more likely than theological liberals to attempt such contact. Among pastors, in contrast, women are more likely than men to have attempted to contact someone in Louisville. Also, relatively more theologically-liberal than moderate or conservative pastors have attempted such contact.

## OTHER COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES

### Few Changes in Contacts, Satisfaction Since 1994

The percentage of panelists in each group that had contacted a national PCUSA office in Louisville over the prior year remained about the same in 1998 as it was in 1994:

**Table 7**  
**Percentages Who Report Contacting Louisville, 1994 and 1998**

	Members		Elders		Pastors		Specialized Clergy	
	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998
<b>Contacted Louisville?</b>								
Yes	9%	8%	16%	17%	78%	80%	66%	60%
No	91%	92%	84%	83%	22%	20%	34%	40%

However, the number of contacts per panelist declined in the member and elder samples. In 1994, more than one-third of members and elders who had contacted offices in Louisville had done so three or more times, compared to only around one in ten in 1998. Perhaps because of this decline in the frequency of contacts, reported dissatisfaction rates also declined. But dissatisfaction rates also declined among both clergy samples, and their contact totals showed little change. In sum, Louisville staff seem to be doing a better job of meeting the expectations of Presbyterians who try to contact them, especially among pastors and specialized clergy.

**Table 8**  
**Satisfaction with Louisville Contacts, 1994 and 1998**

	Members		Elders		Pastors		Specialized Clergy	
	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998
<b>Ever dissatisfied with Louisville contact?</b>								
yes, 2+ times	14%	8%	15%	8%	23%	20%	27%	19%
yes, 1 time only	13%	14%	14%	13%	24%	22%	20%	16%
no	72%	78%	70%	79%	53%	57%	53%	66%
<b>total</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>101%</b>
 median number of contacts*	 2	 2	 2	 2	 4	 5	 4	 4

\*Calculated only for those who reported at least one contact

THE PRESBYTERIAN PANEL

COMMUNICATIONS ACROSS THE CHURCH—MAY 1998

Appendix

	Members	Elders	Ministers
Number of questionnaires mailed .....	1263	1269	1808
Number of questionnaires returned .....	605	680	1170 *
Percent returned .....	48%	54%	65%
*780 pastors; 390 specialized clergy			

Q-1. Below are many types of information that are currently available to the members, elders, and ministers of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Please think about each type of information and tell us if *you personally* want to receive it or be able to access it. (Think about each type of information apart from the *way* you might obtain it. Later on we will address how you might receive or access this information.) Please check *one* box for each type of information.

Do You Personally Want to Obtain Information About... ?	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
<b>a. General Assembly</b>				
yes, definitely .....	22%	29%	69%	67%
yes, probably .....	30%	39%	26%	24%
no, probably not .....	34%	25%	4%	8%
no, definitely not .....	9%	5%	*	1%
no opinion .....	6%	3%	*	1%
<b>b. General Assembly Council (GAC)</b>				
yes, definitely .....	10%	12%	34%	32%
yes, probably .....	24%	32%	45%	39%
no, probably not .....	45%	40%	17%	23%
no, definitely not .....	12%	10%	2%	3%
no opinion .....	10%	7%	2%	3%
<b>c. divisions, boards, and committees of the national church</b>				
yes, definitely .....	4%	5%	19%	18%
yes, probably .....	22%	23%	44%	41%
no, probably not .....	51%	53%	32%	30%
no, definitely not .....	13%	12%	3%	7%
no opinion .....	10%	6%	2%	4%
<b>d. ecumenical groups (e.g., World or National Council of Churches)</b>				
yes, definitely .....	4%	4%	14%	21%
yes, probably .....	27%	30%	44%	45%
no, probably not .....	47%	47%	31%	26%
no, definitely not .....	14%	14%	9%	6%
no opinion .....	8%	5%	2%	2%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

+ = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Q-1. Below are many types of information that are currently available to the members, elders, and ministers of the (cont.) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Please think about each type of information and tell us if *you personally* want to receive it or be able to access it. (Think about each type of information apart from the *way* you might obtain it. Later on we will address how you might receive or access this information.) Please check *one* box for each type of information.

**Do You Personally Want to Obtain Information About...?**

e. announcements of deaths, retirements, and new positions of ministers of the Word and Sacrament

yes, definitely .....	4%	3%	42%	34%
yes, probably .....	17%	17%	38%	38%
no, probably not .....	45%	46%	16%	21%
no, definitely not .....	25%	27%	3%	4%
no opinion .....	10%	6%	1%	3%

f. stories/news about Presbyterian congregations

yes, definitely .....	13%	16%	38%	28%
yes, probably .....	56%	57%	52%	50%
no, probably not .....	20%	20%	8%	17%
no, definitely not .....	6%	4%	1%	3%
no opinion .....	4%	2%	1%	3%

g. stories/news about Presbyterian and other Christian mission around the world

yes, definitely .....	15%	19%	44%	36%
yes, probably .....	54%	53%	48%	48%
no, probably not .....	21%	22%	6%	13%
no, definitely not .....	6%	4%	1%	2%
no opinion .....	4%	2%	1%	2%

h. stories/news about Presbyterian colleges and universities

yes, definitely .....	8%	10%	15%	19%
yes, probably .....	42%	42%	48%	39%
no, probably not .....	34%	36%	31%	33%
no, definitely not .....	10%	9%	4%	6%
no opinion .....	5%	3%	2%	3%

i. stories/news about Presbyterian theological institutions

yes, definitely .....	6%	8%	23%	26%
yes, probably .....	33%	37%	51%	48%
no, probably not .....	42%	42%	21%	20%
no, definitely not .....	13%	10%	3%	4%
no opinion .....	6%	4%	2%	2%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

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Q-1. Below are many types of information that are currently available to the members, elders, and ministers of the (cont.) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Please think about each type of information and tell us if *you personally* want to receive it or be able to access it. (Think about each type of information apart from the *way* you might obtain it. Later on we will address how you might receive or access this information.) Please check *one* box for each type of information.

**Do You Personally Want to Obtain Information About... ?**

j. human interest stories about Presbyterians who are in the news				
yes, definitely .....	17%	18%	34%	28%
yes, probably .....	54%	57%	50%	47%
no, probably not .....	19%	19%	13%	21%
no, definitely not .....	6%	5%	1%	2%
no opinion .....	4%	2%	1%	2%
k. discussions of current social issues from a theological perspective				
yes, definitely .....	27%	28%	49%	51%
yes, probably .....	45%	51%	40%	40%
no, probably not .....	18%	16%	8%	7%
no, definitely not .....	6%	4%	3%	1%
no opinion .....	4%	2%	*	2%
l. information about the denomination's financial status				
yes, definitely .....	9%	14%	25%	20%
yes, probably .....	41%	46%	54%	48%
no, probably not .....	35%	31%	19%	26%
no, definitely not .....	8%	7%	1%	4%
no opinion .....	6%	2%	1%	2%
m. articles on spirituality/growth in faith				
yes, definitely .....	30%	34%	60%	47%
yes, probably .....	50%	50%	33%	39%
no, probably not .....	13%	11%	6%	9%
no, definitely not .....	4%	2%	1%	3%
no opinion .....	3%	2%	1%	2%
n. information about resources available from the national church				
yes, definitely .....	14%	19%	48%	30%
yes, probably .....	42%	45%	41%	46%
no, probably not .....	32%	27%	9%	17%
no, definitely not .....	7%	5%	1%	4%
no opinion .....	6%	4%	1%	3%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

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n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

+ = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Q-1. Below are many types of information that are currently available to the members, elders, and ministers of the (cont.) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Please think about each type of information and tell us if *you personally* want to receive it or be able to access it. (Think about each type of information apart from the *way* you might obtain it. Later on we will address how you might receive or access this information.) Please check *one* box for each type of information.

**Do You Personally Want to Obtain Information About... ?**

o. information about programs of the denomination (e.g., peacemaking, stewardship, evangelism, etc.)				
yes, definitely .....	12%	16%	37%	26%
yes, probably .....	46%	52%	48%	44%
no, probably not .....	29%	24%	13%	24%
no, definitely not .....	7%	5%	2%	3%
no opinion .....	6%	3%	1%	2%
p. opinion pieces, such as columns and editorials, from church leaders				
yes, definitely .....	10%	12%	20%	18%
yes, probably .....	44%	48%	46%	45%
no, probably not .....	30%	31%	27%	28%
no, definitely not .....	9%	6%	6%	6%
no opinion .....	6%	4%	1%	3%
q. opinions from church members				
yes, definitely .....	10%	10%	17%	14%
yes, probably .....	39%	41%	45%	39%
no, probably not .....	35%	38%	32%	36%
no, definitely not .....	10%	7%	6%	8%
no opinion .....	7%	4%	1%	3%
r. information about churchwide events and conferences				
yes, definitely .....	8%	12%	37%	25%
yes, probably .....	39%	41%	51%	49%
no, probably not .....	39%	36%	10%	20%
no, definitely not .....	9%	6%	2%	3%
no opinion .....	6%	5%	1%	3%
s. information about synods and presbyteries				
yes, definitely .....	8%	9%	17%	15%
yes, probably .....	32%	43%	41%	39%
no, probably not .....	41%	38%	35%	33%
no, definitely not .....	11%	8%	5%	8%
no opinion .....	8%	3%	2%	4%

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\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero  
 — = zero (0.0); no cases in this category  
 n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question  
 + = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)  
 ◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Q-1. Below are many types of information that are currently available to the members, elders, and ministers of the (cont.) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Please think about each type of information and tell us if *you personally* want to receive it or be able to access it. (Think about each type of information apart from the *way* you might obtain it. Later on we will address how you might receive or access this information.) Please check *one* box for each type of information.

**Do You Personally Want to Obtain Information About...?**

t. information about Presbyterian beliefs				
yes, definitely .....	29%	33%	40%	33%
yes, probably .....	50%	50%	44%	43%
no, probably not .....	12%	13%	13%	18%
no, definitely not .....	6%	3%	2%	4%
no opinion .....	4%	1%	1%	2%
u. other (specify): _____ .....	26%	20%	13%	16%

Q-2. Think about all of the information you currently receive or access on each of the following topics. At the present time, would you say you obtain as much information as you would like to get on each topic, or would you like to obtain more or less information on each topic? ( *one*  for each item.)

**Information about...**

a. your own congregation				
currently receive right amount .....	78%	82%	79%	74%
want more .....	18%	16%	16%	18%
want less .....	1%	*	1%	3%
not sure .....	3%	2%	4%	6%
b. other congregations in your presbytery				
currently receive right amount .....	49%	48%	52%	56%
want more .....	24%	31%	36%	28%
want less .....	8%	6%	5%	7%
not sure .....	19%	15%	7%	8%
c. PC(USA) congregations in other parts of the U.S.				
currently receive right amount .....	45%	44%	48%	54%
want more .....	16%	20%	33%	23%
want less .....	12%	14%	8%	12%
not sure .....	27%	22%	11%	10%
d. programs and activities of your presbytery				
currently receive right amount .....	58%	60%	77%	70%
want more .....	26%	29%	16%	20%
want less .....	6%	5%	5%	7%
not sure .....	10%	6%	1%	3%
e. programs and activities of your synod				
currently receive right amount .....	51%	52%	57%	59%
want more .....	19%	20%	15%	13%
want less .....	9%	11%	22%	20%
not sure .....	21%	17%	6%	8%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

+ = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

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Q-2. Think about all of the information you currently receive or access on each of the following topics. At the present (cont.) time, would you say you obtain as much information as you would like to get on each topic, or would you like to obtain more or less information on each topic? (✓ one □ for each item.)

**Information about . . .**

f. programs and activities of the national church

currently receive right amount . . . . .	44%	48%	60%	61%
want more . . . . .	23%	25%	26%	24%
want less . . . . .	10%	11%	9%	11%
not sure . . . . .	23%	16%	4%	4%

Q-3. This question deals with how you prefer to obtain information. Generally speaking, how interested are you in obtaining information . . .

a. through general-interest publications (i.e., those that contain information about a broad range of subjects)

very interested . . . . .	12%	17%	29%	25%
interested . . . . .	56%	59%	55%	53%
not too interested . . . . .	26%	22%	14%	21%
not at all interested . . . . .	6%	3%	2%	2%

b. through one or more special-interest publications, (i.e., those that focus on a single subject area)

very interested . . . . .	6%	10%	20%	20%
interested . . . . .	47%	46%	54%	53%
not too interested . . . . .	40%	40%	23%	24%
not at all interested . . . . .	8%	4%	2%	3%

c. via computer, such as through PresbyNet or the Internet (World Wide Web or "WWW")

very interested . . . . .	11%	13%	30%	31%
interested . . . . .	21%	26%	39%	30%
not too interested . . . . .	31%	30%	22%	26%
not at all interested . . . . .	37%	31%	8%	12%

d. by telephone from a general information source, such as PresbyTel

very interested . . . . .	2%	1%	5%	4%
interested . . . . .	8%	10%	26%	14%
not too interested . . . . .	41%	45%	52%	58%
not at all interested . . . . .	49%	45%	17%	24%

e. through videotapes

very interested . . . . .	2%	4%	12%	5%
interested . . . . .	27%	30%	44%	32%
not too interested . . . . .	42%	41%	37%	45%
not at all interested . . . . .	29%	25%	7%	18%

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Q-3. This question deals with how you prefer to obtain information. Generally speaking, how interested are you in (cont.) obtaining information . . .

f. through audiotapes				
very interested . . . . .	2%	2%	4%	3%
interested . . . . .	19%	18%	22%	17%
not too interested . . . . .	46%	49%	55%	53%
not at all interested . . . . .	33%	31%	18%	26%
g. through CD-ROMs				
very interested . . . . .	3%	3%	11%	9%
interested . . . . .	13%	17%	35%	21%
not too interested . . . . .	42%	38%	39%	48%
not at all interested . . . . .	43%	42%	15%	22%
h. via interactive teleconference				
very interested . . . . .	1%	1%	4%	2%
interested . . . . .	6%	5%	16%	15%
not too interested . . . . .	40%	43%	54%	48%
not at all interested . . . . .	53%	51%	25%	34%
a. through some other means (specify): _____ . . .	39%	29%	13%	25%

Q-4. The denomination currently offers two forms of computer-based communication: (1) A conferencing system (PresbyNet) that permits individuals to share ideas, discuss current topics, express opinions, exchange notes, and build community among its users; and (2) a site on the World Wide Web through which information is distributed. How important is it for the denomination to have each of these types of computer-based information-exchange systems?

b. Conferencing system				
very important . . . . .	18%	20%	43%	39%
important . . . . .	35%	38%	31%	34%
not very important . . . . .	14%	15%	14%	11%
not at all important . . . . .	11%	9%	6%	5%
don't know . . . . .	22%	18%	6%	10%
c. Internet web site				
very important . . . . .	26%	31%	60%	52%
important . . . . .	33%	36%	26%	28%
not very important . . . . .	10%	9%	6%	6%
not at all important . . . . .	10%	8%	4%	4%
don't know . . . . .	21%	15%	4%	10%

Q-5. How often (if ever) do you access information by computer from PresbyNet or the Internet (World Wide Web)?

daily . . . . .	2%	3%	13%	12%
several times a week . . . . .	5%	3%	16%	13%
once a week or so . . . . .	2%	3%	11%	7%
2 or 3 times a month . . . . .	2%	3%	7%	6%
once a month or so . . . . .	2%	4%	7%	8%
less than once a month . . . . .	4%	9%	11%	10%
never → <i>Skip to Q-8</i> . . . . .	83%	75%	36%	44%

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Q-6. How interested would you be in seeing PC(USA) leaders participate in regularly-scheduled live "chat rooms" on the Internet, where people can ask questions and engage in conversation by computer?

	n=117	n=179	n=504	n=223
very interested .....	5%	9%	16%	11%
generally interested .....	17%	21%	32%	31%
only a little interested .....	36%	29%	34%	33%
not at all interested .....	29%	29%	16%	21%
don't know .....	13%	12%	3%	5%

Q-7. How much interest do you have in receiving periodicals (such as *Monday Morning* or *Presbyterians Today*) on-line *at a reduced cost* from the printed version?

	n=117	n=179	n=504	n=223
great interest .....	9%	10%	28%	33%
some interest .....	31%	39%	41%	37%
not much interest .....	27%	24%	20%	15%
no interest at all .....	24%	20%	9%	13%
don't know .....	9%	7%	2%	2%

Q-8. If the PC(USA) were to produce programming for radio or TV in these areas, how likely would you be to listen to or watch programs in each of the following areas?

a. Programs that highlight activities in the PC(USA)

very likely .....	8%	10%	21%	15%
likely .....	35%	38%	40%	43%
not too likely .....	35%	33%	29%	29%
not at all likely .....	17%	15%	9%	11%
don't know .....	5%	4%	1%	2%

b. Christian education programs for children and young adults

very likely .....	9%	10%	21%	8%
likely .....	31%	35%	40%	27%
not too likely .....	38%	33%	29%	43%
not at all likely .....	19%	19%	9%	21%
don't know .....	4%	2%	2%	1%

c. Documentaries about social issues and concerns

very likely .....	14%	17%	24%	27%
likely .....	51%	50%	43%	46%
not too likely .....	23%	22%	24%	18%
not at all likely .....	9%	10%	8%	7%
don't know .....	4%	2%	1%	1%

d. Entertainment programs emphasizing faith and family values

very likely .....	20%	18%	22%	13%
likely .....	48%	47%	40%	32%
not too likely .....	19%	22%	29%	35%
not at all likely .....	10%	11%	8%	18%
don't know .....	3%	2%	1%	2%

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Q-8. *If* the PC(USA) were to produce programming for radio or TV in these areas, how likely would you be to listen to (cont.) or watch programs in each of the following areas?

e. Christian drama				
very likely .....	15%	14%	19%	12%
likely .....	38%	37%	41%	31%
not too likely .....	28%	31%	30%	38%
not at all likely .....	15%	15%	9%	16%
don't know .....	4%	3%	1%	3%
f. Preaching and worship				
very likely .....	12%	11%	24%	13%
likely .....	31%	34%	40%	34%
not too likely .....	35%	39%	27%	38%
not at all likely .....	18%	14%	8%	14%
don't know .....	4%	2%	1%	1%
g. Interview programs with Presbyterian and other religious leaders				
very likely .....	8%	9%	17%	13%
likely .....	36%	38%	42%	42%
not too likely .....	35%	36%	30%	31%
not at all likely .....	16%	14%	10%	12%
don't know .....	5%	2%	1%	2%
h. News programs of Christians around the world				
very likely .....	10%	9%	20%	17%
likely .....	42%	43%	44%	41%
not too likely .....	30%	33%	26%	30%
not at all likely .....	13%	13%	8%	10%
don't know .....	5%	2%	1%	2%
i. Book and movie reviews				
very likely .....	9%	8%	12%	12%
likely .....	34%	34%	36%	33%
not too likely .....	35%	36%	37%	34%
not at all likely .....	16%	20%	14%	19%
don't know .....	6%	2%	1%	2%
j. Programs on spirituality				
very likely .....	14%	14%	27%	20%
likely .....	43%	42%	44%	39%
not too likely .....	23%	30%	21%	28%
not at all likely .....	14%	11%	6%	11%
don't know .....	5%	4%	2%	1%
k. Family-focused programs				
very likely .....	16%	15%	22%	9%
likely .....	43%	44%	40%	30%
not too likely .....	23%	27%	26%	42%
not at all likely .....	13%	12%	10%	18%
don't know .....	5%	3%	2%	1%

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Q-9. List what you consider to be the three most valuable sources of information about the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). (List in order of value, with the first source you list being the *most* valuable.)

	+	+	+	+
	◆	◆	◆	◆
<i>News Briefs</i> .....	2%	4%	42%	21%
<i>Presbyterians Today</i> .....	19%	39%	50%	39%
<i>Monday Morning</i> .....	2%	2%	21%	31%
<i>Presbyterians Being Faithful to Jesus Christ</i> .....	2%	6%	9%	5%
<i>GA Minutes</i> .....	*	*	*	2%
General Assembly or General Assembly Council publications .	6%	9%	6%	12%
synod newsletter .....	6%	8%	8%	7%
presbytery newsletter .....	7%	8%	4%	9%
<i>InfoPak</i> .....	—	*	5%	2%
other direct mail .....	3%	2%	5%	4%
PC(USA) News Service bulletins .....	*	*	1%	1%
<i>HORIZONS</i> .....	7%	7%	2%	2%
publications of other PC(USA) offices .....	6%	5%	5%	6%
<i>Presbyterian Outlook</i> .....	3%	9%	45%	38%
<i>Presbyterian Layman</i> .....	10%	16%	13%	6%
other publications of special interest groups .....	6%	8%	6%	9%
the presbytery office .....	4%	7%	4%	4%
local church newsletter .....	26%	20%	2%	5%
local pastor .....	14%	13%	*	1%
one's church/church discussion .....	26%	18%	4%	6%
personal contacts/word of mouth .....	6%	6%	6%	10%
newsletter, newspaper, publications not otherwise specified. .	30%	18%	6%	10%
PresbyNet .....	1%	3%	12%	14%
World Wide Web site/Internet .....	9%	12%	18%	17%
computer (otherwise unspecified) .....	3%	1%	1%	*
PresbyTel .....	2%	1%	2%	2%
telephone (otherwise unspecified) .....	*	*	—	1%
videos/television .....	14%	6%	3%	2%
audio/radio .....	4%	2%	1%	—
Bible .....	2%	1%	—	*
response not applicable .....	7%	4%	2%	2%
all other .....	1%	—	—	—

Q-10. Please indicate how frequently in the last 12 months you have read, watched, listened to, or used each of the following publications and other communications tools linked to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). (If you are *not familiar* with any item, indicate that with a ✓ in the □ in the last column.)

**Official PC(USA) media:**

a. *Presbyterians Today* (general interest magazine of the PC(USA))

often .....	11%	25%	57%	39%
occasionally .....	22%	32%	28%	19%
rarely .....	17%	19%	10%	17%
never .....	18%	14%	4%	20%
not familiar .....	32%	10%	1%	4%

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Q-10. Please indicate how frequently in the last 12 months you have read, watched, listened to, or used each of the (cont.) following publications and other communications tools linked to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). (If you are *not familiar* with any item, indicate that with a ✓ in the □ in the last column.)

**Official PC(USA) media:**

b. *Monday Morning*

(forum-style magazine for Presbyterian leaders)

often .....	1%	2%	38%	42%
occasionally .....	3%	6%	18%	16%
rarely .....	5%	10%	19%	16%
never .....	32%	34%	25%	24%
not familiar .....	59%	49%	*	1%

c. *News Briefs*

(news releases produced by the Presbyterian News Service)

often .....	2%	4%	68%	38%
occasionally .....	7%	12%	21%	25%
rarely .....	11%	15%	7%	14%
never .....	22%	23%	2%	14%
not familiar .....	58%	46%	1%	8%

d. *Presbyterians—Being Faithful to Jesus Christ*

(new general interest newsletter)

often .....	2%	8%	27%	17%
occasionally .....	4%	7%	26%	19%
rarely .....	5%	10%	17%	12%
never .....	25%	23%	13%	25%
not familiar .....	64%	53%	17%	27%

e. *Presbyterian Headline News*

(bulletin inserts included with *News Briefs*)

often .....	3%	2%	24%	14%
occasionally .....	5%	8%	27%	21%
rarely .....	7%	11%	26%	19%
never .....	22%	24%	15%	25%
not familiar .....	63%	54%	8%	21%

f. *Assembly in Brief*, bulletin-sized annual

summary of the General Assembly meeting

often .....	2%	6%	36%	26%
occasionally .....	8%	12%	32%	30%
rarely .....	8%	13%	19%	19%
never .....	23%	23%	9%	15%
not familiar .....	58%	46%	4%	10%

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Q-10. Please indicate how frequently in the last 12 months you have read, watched, listened to, or used each of the (cont.) following publications and other communications tools linked to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). (If you are *not familiar* with any item, indicate that with a ✓ in the □ in the last column.)

**Official PC(USA) media:**

g. *General Assembly News Wrap-Up Edition*, annual tabloid newspaper summary of the General Assembly meeting

often .....	3%	5%	38%	33%
occasionally .....	7%	11%	31%	27%
rarely .....	7%	11%	16%	15%
never .....	24%	24%	10%	14%
not familiar .....	59%	49%	4%	10%

h. PresbyTel, the denomination's toll-free information service ("1-800-UP2DATE")

often .....	*	—	4%	2%
occasionally .....	2%	1%	17%	14%
rarely .....	3%	5%	32%	20%
never .....	32%	39%	41%	50%
not familiar .....	64%	55%	5%	14%

i. PRESBYTEL ONLINE on PresbyNet, the online means of contacting and accessing PresbyTel

often .....	*	1%	6%	5%
occasionally .....	1%	2%	14%	12%
rarely .....	3%	5%	17%	13%
never .....	34%	38%	54%	55%
not familiar .....	63%	54%	9%	15%

j. VoiceLine, a recorded information service available by telephone

often .....	—	*	1%	*
occasionally .....	1%	*	9%	4%
rarely .....	2%	1%	23%	15%
never .....	31%	38%	53%	57%
not familiar .....	67%	60%	13%	23%

k. PresbyFax, a means of accessing selected documents via fax machine

often .....	—	—	1%	1%
occasionally .....	*	—	1%	1%
rarely .....	1%	1%	11%	9%
never .....	33%	38%	67%	58%
not familiar .....	66%	61%	20%	30%

l. PresbyNet, a computer-conferencing system

often .....	*	1%	15%	14%
occasionally .....	*	2%	10%	10%
rarely .....	2%	4%	14%	13%
never .....	33%	39%	53%	49%
not familiar .....	64%	55%	8%	15%

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Q-10. Please indicate how frequently in the last 12 months you have read, watched, listened to, or used each of the (cont.) following publications and other communications tools linked to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). (If you are *not familiar* with any item, indicate that with a ✓ in the □ in the last column.)

**Official PC(USA) media:**

m. the PC(USA) World Wide Web site ([www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org))

often .....	2%	2%	21%	16%
occasionally .....	5%	8%	21%	20%
rarely .....	3%	7%	12%	13%
never .....	32%	34%	40%	37%
not familiar .....	59%	49%	6%	15%

n. Presbyterian Features, feature stories and other information produced by the Office of Church and Public Relations

often .....	1%	1%	3%	3%
occasionally .....	7%	8%	17%	14%
rarely .....	10%	11%	26%	20%
never .....	23%	28%	27%	35%
not familiar .....	59%	51%	28%	28%

o. *HORIZONS*, the magazine of Presbyterian Women

often .....	12%	10%	10%	9%
occasionally .....	13%	16%	20%	15%
rarely .....	11%	11%	28%	17%
never .....	24%	29%	38%	45%
not familiar .....	40%	35%	3%	14%

p. *Church & Society* magazine

often .....	1%	1%	5%	8%
occasionally .....	5%	5%	14%	19%
rarely .....	6%	7%	29%	22%
never .....	26%	29%	42%	38%
not familiar .....	61%	58%	10%	13%

**Other media:**

q. *Presbyterian Layman*, a newspaper published by the Presbyterian Lay Committee

often .....	10%	18%	27%	15%
occasionally .....	13%	21%	26%	19%
rarely .....	11%	14%	22%	19%
never .....	22%	20%	25%	45%
not familiar .....	44%	27%	*	2%

r. *Presbyterian Outlook*, a magazine published by The Outlook Foundation

often .....	4%	8%	54%	38%
occasionally .....	9%	18%	21%	24%
rarely .....	13%	16%	15%	16%
never .....	23%	22%	9%	19%
not familiar .....	52%	36%	1%	2%

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Q-10. Please indicate how frequently in the last 12 months you have read, watched, listened to, or used each of the (cont.) following publications and other communications tools linked to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). (If you are *not familiar* with any item, indicate that with a ✓ in the □ in the last column.)

**Other media:**

s. "Protestant Hour," a radio preaching program

often .....	1%	1%	1%	2%
occasionally .....	7%	5%	6%	7%
rarely .....	7%	9%	22%	16%
never .....	28%	33%	60%	61%
not familiar .....	58%	52%	11%	14%

t. "Passages," a radio program of faith stories produced by the Presbyterian Media Mission

often .....	*	1%	1%	1%
occasionally .....	1%	2%	3%	3%
rarely .....	4%	5%	14%	10%
never .....	28%	32%	55%	54%
not familiar .....	66%	61%	27%	32%

u. "Odyssey," the religion cable TV network

often .....	2%	2%	3%	2%
occasionally .....	4%	6%	8%	7%
rarely .....	5%	9%	14%	10%
never .....	28%	30%	52%	50%
not familiar .....	61%	54%	23%	30%

Q-11. Which of the media in Q-10 do you consider to be the *most reliable and accurate* sources of information? List up to 3 media, in order of reliability ("1" = *most* reliable and accurate). Write the letters of your choices on the lines.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

	+	+	+	+
<b>Official PC(USA) media:</b>	◆	◆	◆	◆
a. <i>Presbyterians Today</i> .....	59%	72%	53%	50%
b. <i>Monday Morning</i> .....	6%	8%	21%	25%
c. <i>News Briefs</i> .....	13%	16%	62%	48%
d. <i>Presbyterians Being Faithful</i> .....	9%	13%	15%	15%
e. <i>Presbyterian Headline News</i> .....	12%	5%	5%	3%
f. <i>Assembly in Brief</i> .....	12%	11%	10%	13%
g. <i>General Assembly News Wrap-Up Edition</i> .....	9%	14%	12%	18%
h. PresbyTel .....	4%	1%	3%	3%
i. PRESBYTEL ONLINE .....	3%	2%	3%	5%
j. VoiceLine .....	1%	*	1%	*
k. PresbyFax .....	—	1%	—	—
l. PresbyNet .....	1%	2%	7%	7%
m. the PC(USA) World Wide Web site .....	14%	14%	15%	13%
n. Presbyterian Features .....	8%	2%	1%	1%
o. HORIZONS .....	31%	20%	6%	8%
p. Church & Society magazine .....	4%	2%	2%	8%

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Q-11. Which of the media in Q-10 do you consider to be the *most reliable and accurate* sources of information? List up to 3 media, in order of reliability ("1" = *most* reliable and accurate). Write the letters of your choices on the lines.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

	+	+	+	+
<b>Other media:</b>	◆	◆	◆	◆
q. <i>Presbyterian Layman</i> .....	28%	27%	18%	10%
r. <i>Presbyterian Outlook</i> .....	13%	20%	48%	43%
s. "Protestant Hour" .....	5%	2%	1%	1%
t. "Passages" .....	1%	1%	*	—
u. "Odyssey" .....	4%	4%	1%	2%

Q-12. How familiar are you with the "National Cooperative Media Campaign" of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—its theme is "Stop In and Find Out"?

very familiar .....	1%	*	3%	2%
generally familiar .....	*	1%	14%	6%
not too familiar .....	3%	4%	22%	10%
not at all familiar .....	75%	74%	48%	63%
don't know .....	21%	21%	14%	20%

Q-13. Would you be interested in PC(USA)-produced print, TV, or radio advertisements that your church could purchase for a nominal amount and then pay to use in your local media?

very interested .....	3%	6%	21%	9%
generally interested .....	16%	15%	31%	18%
only a little interested .....	19%	24%	25%	19%
not at all interested .....	35%	32%	16%	30%
don't know .....	28%	24%	7%	24%

Q-14. Last year, the PC(USA) produced a satellite teleconference in which participants, watching from downlink sites around the country, had a chance to ask questions of church leaders. How much interest do you have in participating in such a teleconference in the future?

very interested .....	3%	2%	5%	3%
generally interested .....	10%	14%	20%	20%
only a little interested .....	18%	28%	41%	37%
not at all interested .....	54%	43%	31%	34%
don't know .....	15%	13%	3%	6%

Q-15. How would you prefer to participate in future teleconferences?

by satellite or video conferencing, which requires you to go to a special site .....	4%	7%	8%	8%
by home computer or video device, which enables you to participate from any location .....	16%	18%	39%	36%
no preference .....	37%	38%	36%	33%
not sure .....	42%	38%	18%	24%

\* = less than 0.5%; rounds to zero

— = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

n = number of respondents eligible to answer this question

+ = nonresponses of 10% or more on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

◆ = percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could make more than one response

Q-16. In general, how valuable do you consider teleconferences as a medium for teaching or training?

very valuable	4%	4%	5%	6%
generally valuable	27%	32%	28%	26%
only a little valuable	21%	23%	36%	37%
not at all valuable	7%	9%	11%	9%
don't know	42%	32%	20%	22%

Q-17. Please think back over the last year. Did you at any time try to get in touch with a national church office or staff member in Louisville (whether by phone, by letter, in person, by electronic mail, etc.) to express an opinion, share an observation, ask for information, order resources (or for any other reason)?

yes → _____ times (write in the approximate number)	8%	17%	80%	60%
no → <i>Skip to Q-21</i>	92%	83%	20%	40%

Q-17a. [If "yes",] number of times	n=45	n=113	n=597	n=217
1 - 2 times	88%	94%	20%	29%
3 - 5 times	12%	6%	40%	33%
6 - 10 times	—	—	24%	20%
11 - 15 times	—	—	9%	8%
16 - 20 times	—	—	3%	2%
more than 20 times	—	—	3%	7%

Q-18. Overall, how satisfied were you with your contacts with (or attempts to contact) the national church in Louisville?

	n=45	n=113	n=597	n=217
very satisfied	55%	44%	42%	46%
moderately satisfied	18%	33%	32%	33%
both satisfied and dissatisfied	17%	12%	16%	12%
moderately dissatisfied	7%	7%	6%	4%
very dissatisfied	3%	4%	4%	5%

Q-19. Regardless of your overall satisfaction, were you at any time or in any way *dissatisfied* by your contacts with (or attempts to contact) the national church in Louisville?

	n=45	n=113	n=597	n=217
no, never dissatisfied → <i>Skip to Q-21</i>	78%	79%	57%	66%
yes, dissatisfied once → <i>Continue with next question</i>	14%	13%	22%	16%
yes, dissatisfied more than once → <i>Continue with next question</i>	8%	8%	20%	19%

Q-20. If yes, what was the basis for your dissatisfaction? Please describe the reason(s) for your dissatisfaction below:

	◆ n=13	◆ n=29	◆ n=264	◆ n=83
voice mail/answering machine	—	22%	29%	36%
person never available	8%	—	2%	1%
calls not returned	17%	15%	28%	26%
calls returned too slowly	—	11%	14%	12%
difficulty/inability to reach appropriate person;				
time difference issues	50%	22%	19%	26%
person not knowledgeable	8%	15%	16%	8%
all other	33%	33%	25%	27%

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Q-21. There are many possible ways for Presbyterians (whether ministers, elders, or members) to express their opinions, share ideas, and discuss with each other issues relevant to the denomination. What do you think of the *general idea* of the denomination supporting each of these types of formats for such discussions?

a. journal/magazine consisting largely of an exchange of letters				
excellent idea .....	8%	8%	14%	12%
good idea .....	33%	33%	29%	32%
fair idea .....	33%	34%	31%	32%
poor idea .....	9%	14%	23%	18%
no opinion .....	17%	11%	3%	6%
b. a denominational-sponsored computer network for electronic mail and conferencing				
excellent idea .....	10%	11%	26%	23%
good idea .....	33%	42%	41%	45%
fair idea .....	23%	22%	23%	18%
poor idea .....	6%	6%	6%	5%
no opinion .....	28%	19%	5%	8%
c. regularly-scheduled interactive video conferences in which national church leaders and church members could talk to each other				
excellent idea .....	5%	6%	7%	8%
good idea .....	27%	33%	27%	28%
fair idea .....	33%	33%	40%	38%
poor idea .....	8%	10%	18%	16%
no opinion .....	26%	18%	7%	10%
d. a "ministry of dialogue" in which teams of national staff persons and elected board members travel around the country to meet with groups of Presbyterians (at the invitation of those groups)				
excellent idea .....	12%	16%	24%	22%
good idea .....	35%	36%	36%	34%
fair idea .....	25%	23%	25%	25%
poor idea .....	10%	11%	13%	14%
no opinion .....	18%	14%	3%	6%

Q-22. If the PC(USA) could afford to support only one type of system or publication for information sharing among individual Presbyterians, which *one* of the methods listed above (in Q-21) would *you personally* prefer? (Write the letter corresponding to your choice on the line.) \_\_\_\_\_

	+	+	+	
journal/magazine consisting largely of an exchange of letters	37%	33%	27%	24%
a denominational-sponsored computer network for electronic mail and conferencing .....	27%	22%	38%	39%
regularly-scheduled interactive video conferences in which national church leaders and church members could talk to each other .....	9%	9%	6%	7%
a "ministry of dialogue" in which teams of national staff persons and elected board members travel around the country to meet with groups of Presbyterians (at the invitation of those groups .....	27%	35%	29%	28%
all others .....	1%	*	1%	1%

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Q-23. Please make any other comments in the space below.

[not tabulated]

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