

2009 Survey of Pastors

A: Quantitative Responses

Number of surveys mailed	110
Number of undeliverable surveys and ineligible respondents.....	1
Number of surveys completed	41
Response rate	37%

Q1. Have economic factors ever influenced your response to a call?

Yes.....60%
No40%

If “yes,” please describe how economic factors influenced your response to one or more particular calls.

[Tabulated separately]

Q2. Are you aware of any ministers or other church employees in your presbytery whose income is inadequate for their needs? (Think of this in terms of both sufficiency and sustainability.)

Yes.....65%
No35%

If “yes,” please describe the situation(s).

[Tabulated separately]

Q3. Do you believe that your presbytery’s minimum terms of call, especially cash salary minimums, are:

a. Appropriate?

Yes.....85%
No15%

b. Useful?

Yes.....85%
No15%

c. Adequate?

Yes.....70%
No30%

Please explain your responses.

[Tabulated separately]

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

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

Q4. Have you ever considered the idea of having the presbytery declare a maximum for salaries for pastors?

Yes.....20%
No80%

What particular thoughts do you have about that idea? (One presbytery has such a maximum at this time.)

[Tabulated separately]

Q5. Do you think that secular market assumptions influence or affect the compensation practices of the PC(USA)?

Yes, extensively.....26%
Yes, a fair amount.....50%
Yes, but only a little.....16%
No8%

Please explain your response.

[Tabulated separately]

Q6. Does the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at large have any role or responsibility to meet or respond to the compensation needs of pastors of particular congregations?

Yes.....70%
No30%

Please explain your response.

[Tabulated separately]

Q7. What do you think are key biblical, theological, and ethical values that *should* influence the church's compensation practices?

[Tabulated separately]

Q8. Do you see the values you mentioned in Q7 at work, and if so, how? If not, why do you think they are not influential?

[Tabulated separately]

Q9. Should these values affect the church's stance toward secular and/or corporate compensation practices?

[Tabulated separately]

Q10. Some in the church have suggested specific ratios between the highest and lowest paid salaries as has been the practice for some GA agencies. Please comment on this idea in the following places:

a. Within your congregation

[Tabulated separately]

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

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

Q10. Some in the church have suggested specific ratios between the highest and lowest paid salaries as has been the [cont.] practice for some GA agencies. Please comment on this idea in the following places:

b. Between ministers in your presbytery

[Tabulated separately]

c. Between staff members of a congregation, in general

[Tabulated separately]

d. Between members of a presbytery office staff, in general

[Tabulated separately]

e. Between those working at the national offices (program staff and support staff)

[Tabulated separately]

Q11. You may be aware that female and racial-ethnic pastors often receive lower compensation than white male pastors, even accounting for differences in experience. Does the PC(USA) have a responsibility to address that inequality?

Yes..... 78%

No 22%

If so, what measures would you suggest?

[Tabulated separately]

Q12. What questions have we not asked or would you suggest for our task force to consider? Other comments or recommendations/suggestions?

[Tabulated separately]

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

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

2009 Survey of Pastors

B: Responses to Open-Ended Questions

- Q-1. Have economic factors ever influenced your response to a call? If “yes,” please describe how economic factors influenced your response to one or more particular calls.**
- Not to a formally issued call, no. But it has affected the call process – i.e., a church wishing to talk to me, but was not able to provide enough compensation for me and my family.
 - I didn’t talk to a PNC committee. I looked at their proposed salary.
 - For my sake: Can I pay the bills according to the standard of living of the area? For the church’s sake: Do they realize and value the work of the pastor appropriately? Is their treasure really going where their heart is?
 - Eliminated calls that were at presbytery minimums
 - My first call was part-time, minimal pay. I had two young children (1985). In second call, I suspected that I might soon be divorced and needed to earn enough to live with one wage earner (me) (1988). In this my third call, I will be doing more secretarial duties next year as we lay off office staff (part-time). We only have 100 members.
 - Here, salaries were cut 10%+. Influences future considerations and current commitment.
 - I am currently working but will have to leave my church soon because of the financial needs of my family.
 - I am unable to consider any other calls as we are now “upside down” on our mortgage.
 - Needed to work full-time and be accruing pension credits
 - But we were offered significantly more money at a second church we interviewed at. We ended up accepting the call with less money, but there was a pull towards the other church.
 - As the sole supporter of the family, with a son in college and a disabled husband, I had to be careful about the call I chose so that I could provide for my family’s basic needs, not luxuries.
 - Yes, when I began the ministry in 1995 I needed to assure that I had enough to sustain me as a single person. I could not depend on anyone else to do this. Now that I am married, I am the major income provider and need to make sure that I have enough for our retirement and health concerns.
 - I always consider cost of living in area versus salary – more than ever now that I am a single man. Money is hugely important.
 - I have served small churches since 1988 and with a growing family, growing debt load, and the cost of living, have been very concerned about my terms.
 - The financial health of my present call church influenced my decision to accept the call.
 - Pastors provided some insight into the type of relationship a flock has with its pastor.
 - With the advent of more children we needed more financial support and a larger place in which to live. When a congregation was not willing to meet the COLA, we saw our purchase power decline.
 - Compensation wouldn’t cover living expenses. Fair rental value of manse was too high. Social security costs were too high.
 - This survey seems to have been written to cultivate particular answers. Is the bias here toward a non-reformed view of stewardship?
 - Practical cost of living and family obligations
 - Some calls were not realistically possible as we have four dependents to support.
 - My wife and I both work to support our family. I will not even consider a call that does not adequately provide for us. That includes living in the community where the church is.

Q-2. Are you aware of any ministers or other church employees in your presbytery whose income is inadequate for their needs? (Think of this in terms of both sufficiency and sustainability.) If “yes,” please describe the situation(s).

- Younger pastor with significant debt
- Maybe. God provides all things, but he seems to provide a lot more to leaders in large, rich, white churches than smaller, poorer, or minority churches. As a denomination, is our treasure going where our heart really is? Are our best leaders serving the haves or the have nots?
- Smaller churches have cut back so those at the minimum are at risk.
- The other associate and I both drive between 25-45 miles one way to get to our church. The cost of living is too high for us to live closer.
- Some of them have lost homes (two I know of). Some have had to take second jobs. My wife is now working two jobs to supplement our income. My pay was cut this year!
- Ministers who find themselves without call due to conflict in the church, health issues (until disability kicks in) are left high and dry. We work for a monopoly, the PC(USA).
- But many who just make it by – especially youth staff – and part-time employees
- A minister at a church of a little more than 100 members has a rather large family and needs to find supplementary income.
- In particular, a female colleague in her 50s who struggles to support her aging mother and herself (single female).
- Smaller congregations struggle to even meet established presbytery minimums, especially factoring in pension dues.
- Loan payments/general cost of living, education for children
- Some churches have needed to merge to support ministers’ salaries.
- Several struggling pastors of smaller churches
- Not personally, but I suspect it may be true.
- I know of pastors in part-time situations who would prefer and need full-time work.
- Pastors who haven’t had COLA in years or get COLAs at the same time other expenses in terms of call are cut
- Pastor changing a call in PA because of low wage
- Pastors of a small church, paying part-time wages to a woman who became pregnant with her first child. Both parents must work in order to match needs with resources.
- High housing costs
- A church has received permission to offer less than the minimum with the stated expectation that they are to meet the minimum within a particular timeframe. Unfortunately, there is an unwillingness to enforce such an expectation (dissolve the call).
- Often require singles willing/able to rent rooms/share apartments or require spouse to work full-time.
- It’s difficult to live in a \$200,000 plus area with a \$50,000 salary.
- I know several pastors/employees who have not received any kind of raise in three years. It seems to be fairly common for churches to assume that the hiring pay will be sufficient for the employee several years down the road. I also know a young Navy chaplain who wants to return to parish ministry, but recognizes that his family couldn’t survive the pay cut because only a few churches offer a similar salary.

Q-3. Do you believe that your presbytery’s minimum terms of call, especially cash salary minimums, are: Appropriate? Useful? Adequate? Please explain your responses.

- Adequacy does depend on particular location. Some can’t afford to live in the community due to level of compensation and thus become “hired help.”
- Half of the churches in our presbytery are under a hundred members (roughly), so that the minimum standards reflect that. Living in a coastal, vacation community, these standards would be too low for my community.
- Again, a small church that’s in trouble cannot afford the leadership it would need to be resurrected. The minimums are both too low to attract someone with the required education and too high for a small church to pay.
- The minimums put families on food assistance in schools and if we had no insurance could qualify for better coverage, free from the state. Not a good situation.

- We must set some minimum. Useful only in establishing a minimum and minimum study leave. Adequacy depends on pastor and family situation i.e., clergy couples serving two calls vs. a very involved family building up a single church with only one official call.
- I am at the minimum and this is the only way I get increased income. Cost of living in NE Ohio is reasonable, and I have enough to support myself. My children are now adults, independent, through college. I am considering downsizing my living situation so that I can pay off credit cards and save more for retirement. I go into debt for traveling and vacation. Hope I don't get sick.
- We need something to base entry positions on, but these can't be held up as a judge of the larger churches who are able to pay well beyond the minimum. Costs in different parts of the country need to be considered in setting the minimum.
- Helpful, but my church did not follow the minimums and we are in the highest zip code for cost of living.
- They are a good guide, but being adequate is a tough call. In our area spouses have a hard time getting paid adequately.
- Honestly, I'm not sure what they are.
- There are many small churches in our presbytery which could not afford a higher salary minimum.
- Subsidy needed for smaller congregations.
- During these economic times, it is necessary to hold the line on minimums without having pastors slip into the poverty level or to be making more than most in their communities in which they serve.
- In fact I was just in conversation with colleagues who have expressed a growing opinion that minimum terms are unrealistic in some small churches who cannot afford even part-time pastors when BOP is added on. The minimum terms are quite appropriate considering the economy.
- "The worker is worth his wages."
- Our COM has been very proactive in the area of salary minimums.
- Very necessary to have them. They are too low. Churches don't understand why they can't get a pastor.
- Presbyteries in which I have been involved do a good job in salary compensation at a fair level; for people with our level of degrees and/or experience. Congregations may not realize that these terms are only minimums and therefore unwilling to pay beyond them.
- A&C – both terms are relative for each pastor's needs may be different (size of the family, student loans, size of the town, etc.) B – useful, yes! Adequate, I am not sure about.
- They are fair for this geographic area, but more and more churches are moving to part-time because they can't afford presbytery minimums. I've also heard rumors that COM doesn't enforce minimums.
- Self-explanatory
- Very helpful since this is regional.
- It's difficult to live in a \$200,000 plus area with a \$50,000 salary.
- Too low given regional cost of living. Necessitates other income sources.
- Many churches, especially in our presbytery, want a pastor as cheaply as possible. They look especially to retired military chaplains, knowing they don't need full and fair pay because of the military pension. It is appropriate therefore to have a minimum salary set. However, our presbytery includes rural areas as well as wealthy urban areas. The minimum salary is around \$39,000, but the median income for my church is approximately \$70K. When looking for a pastor, they start with the bare minimum of \$39K. This is especially inadequate because on that salary a pastor cannot afford to purchase a home near many of our churches.

Q-4. Have you ever considered the idea of having the presbytery declare a maximum for salaries for pastors? What particular thoughts do you have about that idea? (One presbytery has such a maximum at this time.)

- It would make some sense.
- Individual congregations should not be limited as to their top range of salaries for any staff person.
- Certainly an idea worth discussing, but it may not be worth the time and effort, given how few would be touched by it.
- Why are pastors paid so differently in the first place? In a nearby PC(USA) church with four pastors, one is paid three times as much as another. Is his work three times more valuable to God's kingdom? Are we really all ordained to the same status, just with different functions? Or is there really a hierarchy with the rich at the top?

- Great idea
- However, I think a good idea is that my congregation which goes above some declared maximum level should match dollar-for-dollar the amount above that upper level for a gift to the presbytery for 1) seminary scholarships or 2) assistance to struggling churches.
- It's foolish to regulate those who have a lot. That's not a solution. This isn't about social engineering but about fair compensation. Stupid idea!
- Pastors should be paid enough. More than that is up to discretion of church, not the presbytery.
- It is inappropriate for some to be paid a package of over \$200K while others are scarcely above or at the poverty level.
- Our presbytery is considering this. If a very large church wants to support a very large salary, who am I to say it's out of line. I might think a colleague is overpaid, but I'm more concerned with colleagues who are underpaid.
- There is no reason for this. Larger congregations necessarily require more pastoral attention than smaller ones, and thus it is reasonable for pastors of larger congregations to be compensated more generously. Larger salaries may also be necessary to attract ministers from parts of the country where the cost of living is higher. Pastors with larger families need larger incomes. "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need" is Marxism, not Christianity.
- This has never been discussed as far as I know at the presbytery level, but I have wondered about it. It is worth exploring and considering.
- This suggestion is in keeping with the principles of "parity" in the PC(USA).
- One presbytery has such a maximum at this time. This would be a refreshing idea. After all, we have seen CEOs etc. receive large sums of money at others' expense. This is a matter of ethics and a great witness to ministry to those with outrageous salaries in the secular world, as well as those in non-denominational ministries.
- The last senior pastor of my church was paid too much compared to everyone else in the presbytery, as well as the associates in the church.
- While I have heard of a small number of pastors receiving "large" salaries, the vast majority are living quite moderately. Also pastors of large churches probably earn it!
- I have a concern for each congregation making their own decision on this matter.
- Sounds like a good idea.
- I don't think we'll ever reach a point that it would become necessary given current pay and rising cost of living.
- That is a session decision, not a justice issue.
- Bad idea
- Pastors and congregations should decide the salaries, not presbytery. They are better situated to decide and develop what would be a fair/just compensation.
- If the maximum is adequate, it is a good idea.
- Would not support this.
- This idea is bureaucratic overkill. How much time and energy is spent enforcing such a requirement? I would be reluctant to pursue a call in a presbytery with such over-reaching authority.
- Prefer local congregation to decide this matter.
- This is hard to gauge because I firmly believe the pastor should be paid the average his or her congregation makes annually. Therefore, pastors in extremely wealthy communities should be paid enough to fit in comfortably with that community. The danger is that these wealthy churches will become the most popular among pastors seeking a different/new call. Money should not be the motivation behind what we do.

Q-5. Do you think that secular market assumptions influence or affect the compensation practices of the PC(USA)? Please explain your response.

- I have heard from parishioners and clergy alike that you get what you pay for.
- Ministers have always been paid less than their peers with equal education and experience.
- This is reflected in the salaries of national staff (stated clerk, etc.) This also has an effect on presbytery staff salaries (normally much higher for EPs and GPs than pastors).
- Personnel committee always benchmarks.

- There is clearly a hierarchy of pastors and presbytery staff that I do not believe reflects God's economy. I can understand paying pastors with more experience a bigger salary, but not as much as we do. And we all know that pastors at tall steeple churches, regardless of experience, ability, or call get paid more. Why is that?
- Clergy in general feel undervalued. Shrinking congregations make installed clergy feel vulnerable. My colleagues worry about their next call. I am holding on until retirement (3-5 years away).
- If they set the standards for secular life that the church has to function in, then they are important to follow and understand. It affects all the people in the church. Therefore it has to affect church staffing!
- We are treated as secular executives/managers/employees, not people who have dedicated their lives to God, simply needing to have basic needs met.
- I think that most congregations haven't got a clue what to have as a comparative in the secular marketplace. When I went into ministry it was a tenured associate professor rank at a major of the state's major university. Now it's fallen to first year public school teachers.
- It is reasonable, although not absolutely necessary, for congregations to compensate their pastors at a level which approximates the average salary of the congregation.
- Especially in the last 12-18 months I see packages affected by economic downturn.
- Churches historically have been considered exempt from market influences from a lay point of view when it comes to clergy compensation.
- Without a doubt, the secular economics are in a state of change. Savings are being depleted and yet others seem to thrive on the backs of others.
- Churches only pay what they can afford. A bad secular market affects congregational giving.
- Our church has frozen my salary because of the general economy. We have been seeing less gifts come in, but we are also sensitive to the situation of members and the message that a raise in my salary might send.
- Most churches I know of would like to pay more but are hampered by budgetary restraints.
- We live in a culture that does impact our cost of living and the concerns that touch our pastors and their families.
- Bigger churches, like bigger secular employers, are able to pay more, and do. It is assumed that these secular market influences are appropriate.
- Some congregations will do the homework necessary to compare the pastor's salaries in light of other community leaders and educational levels. However, in the end, it all depends upon the giving of the congregation.
- I do not know enough about it.
- Money and compensation are a part of the discernment. Pastors do not take vows of poverty as in some traditions.
- The market compensates based on replacement value of employees. Churches similarly compensate based on the value an individual represents to the church, and the cost to their mission replacing an individual represents.
- Not much published that I am aware of.
- Don't know
- The older model seems to be "we pay the pastor like a pastor is supposed to be paid." That is: not much, but enough to survive. Some people and churches recognize that pastors hold an advanced professional degree and specialized training, and therefore offer appropriate compensation. Also, factoring in now is the increased cost of seminary. Many pastors are bringing significant amounts of educational debt with them.

Q-6. Does the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at large have any role or responsibility to meet or respond to the compensation needs of pastors of particular congregations? Please explain your response.

- If we are to be stewards of all our resources we must be stewards of our pastors.
- If particular congregations are struggling due to presbytery minimums or if pastors are struggling because of low minimums, the church should respond to ensure just compensation.
- Especially in NCD or small churches in a district area (small town).
- I think as a denomination we have an opportunity to seriously consider how our practice of compensation betrays our theology of leadership. 1) I think many churches pay pastors and staff in general to do ministry instead of the session, not with the session (especially small churches). 2) I think the discrepancy in the pay of pastors, even working within a few blocks of each other (or even on the same staff) could be construed as saying some pastorates and congregations are more important.
- Leave at presbytery level.

- If PC(USA) wants to keep a presence in urban areas on targeted mission churches. I think start-up ethnic congregations should be supported.
- Stay out of it.
- They have a responsibility to ensure adequate compensation. If there is not adequate compensation then we will not retain or recruit new pastors.
- It should help train and guide presbyteries and churches.
- When we take ordination vows we give – we gift over to the church – we entrust the denomination with our lives and our livelihood. I have never thought the church (at any level) ever cherished or celebrated or honored the depth of that gift as a gift that keeps on giving, nor that institutionally “the church” bears some responsibility to be good stewards of that gift.
- Not sure!
- The denomination is already too interested in matters concerning property. Presbyteries are free and capable of helping smaller congregations meet their pastoral needs.
- We are a connectional system and I value the broader wisdom that comes when we all support and advise one another and hold each other accountable in the area of compensation.
- Meeting standard of living needs of clergy helps insure quality of care given to congregations. If clergy are distracted by personal financial concerns that will affect their performance.
- It is time to rethink GA – “Who are the ministers here?” is often the question I hear from congregations of 100 and less, which makes up the majority of most presbyteries.
- PC(USA) should ensure all pastors are making at least the minimum salary for their factor.
- To the extent they are able. PC(USA) should respond to legitimate needs (determined by the COM of each presbytery) of pastors in viable ministries who are in need.
- We are a connectional church. Those who have a responsibility to generously help those who have not.
- When a small church cannot meet minimums the larger church can assist.
- Seems to be a congregation/presbytery issue.
- Clergy compensation report stating why we pay pastors so they don’t need to seek other employment is very helpful.
- I think more should be done to alleviate debt so pastors are free to take lower paying calls.
- Encouragement, monitoring, possibly provide funds to give them a trial run at a decent candidate.
- That decision is best left at the local level since PC(USA) cannot possibly know what is occurring at that lower level. If anyone should help it should be the presbytery as part of its mission work.
- But, I do not know if they are already involved.
- We need to encourage compensation to be responsibility of congregation.
- No one goes into ministry to get rich. But as membership declines and a majority of congregations lose the ability to support the ministry of a full-time pastor, ordained persons should not be expected to bear the entirety of that burden. BOP is a good start. What about tuition assistance for children of pastors serving smaller churches?
- Prefer to leave this to local congregation.
- Pastors need to live adequately as well. PC(USA) does not do enough for pastors. It cares too much about liberal, progressive causes.
- In grace – yes. In a systematic way – no.
- I believe the PC(USA) at large could help raise awareness of the cost and training involved in becoming ordained, as well as counsel with churches as to what is fair compensation and exactly what makes it fair.

Q-7. What do you think are key biblical, theological, and ethical values that *should* influence the church’s compensation practices?

- Godly calling comes first. Stewardship of people as well as resources, equity, recapturing value and privilege of serving as pastors (eroded by culture, Commissioned Lay Pastor (CLP), shift in role.)
- Justice, compassion
- I think other than minimum calls the governing bodies beyond session should stay out of these matters. Let session decide.
- The laborer is worthy of his hire. The minister is to serve and not be served.
- I do not think ratios are appropriate.

- “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be.” Which pastorates, which pastors, which congregations do we value? Which need the strongest leadership? The one body with many members and “what you have done to the least of these...”
- They should sustain and provide for pastors’ needs. I don’t believe “merit” increases or comparisons have a place. Rather sustaining enables a pastor to give full attention to the ministry.
- Fairness in time off, protection for retirement in old age, benefits such as healthcare and long-term insurance. Servant/leadership, enough income so that one’s needs are met. “A laborer is worthy of his/her wage.”
- Perhaps the workman should not be denied his/her wages. Maybe we shouldn’t ignore their needs by shifting resources to foolish endeavors beyond the presbytery level.
- Gifts are given by God for the glory of God and common good for humanity. We must reconsider how we live and give for the common good.
- The concept of the ox being allowed to eat the grain as it works. If the ox goes hungry, it cannot tread the grain. If ministers are underpaid/overpaid, they lose focus on why they are there.
- Cherishing the call to be a Minister of Word and Sacrament as a high calling, not as frivolous, or simple. Value of the call; responsibility of the stewards. That each church has access to pastoral leadership. Value of a pastor as leader of a congregation.
- Laborer is worthy of his/her hire.
- To be fair, to be generous means that a pastor should have financial security to free them to worry about ministry, not how to pay for kid’s braces.
- Justice, compassion
- Since Jesus taught that “The laborer is worthy of his wages,” it is appropriate for those elders who work hard at preaching and teaching to be compensated fairly for their labor. The church needs to rediscover the discipline of tithing, which is taught in both Old Testament and New Testament.
- Biblical: Our compensation should reflect humility, justice, and mercy.
- Using the framework of the question asked of congregations in the service of installation (re: compensation) would be a good place to start. Why not reflect on Jubilee directives? In particular, canceling debts, redistributing capital.
- Fairness/justice. Shepherds, laborers in the vineyard were not volunteers. Fair market prices should apply to the church as they do for higher education institutions.
- Yes, definitely. Get back to biblical principles that are not influenced by left wing politics nor polarized by the right. This is a true justice issue. Time to glean what the Old Testament harvesters did by leaving some grain the field. Instead of a welfare mentality that pervades the U.S.
- The church expects the pastors to give everything – time, labor, privacy in service. It should compensate highly for that kind of sacrifice.
- Mercy, grace – I haven’t thought much about it. Only that a congregation needs to nurture and partner with their pastor/staff. It is a calling that is mutual.
- “The worker is worth his wages.” Generosity, justice, cheerful living. Loving provision so church workers can serve without having to take a second job.
- God is our Lord, not money. The worker in God’s kingdom should be compensated for their work, energy, love, and care for the church and be free from material concerns.
- Justice and compassion
- Generosity and tithing
- Justice, fair pay
- A person is worthy of his/her hire. Do not muzzle the ox. Pastor and congregation should pray and discern what the best arrangement is. Allow the decision-making to occur at the lowest level. People should be paid in response to their labor and work, as determined by all parties involved.
- Fairness, justice, adequacy, and compassion
- Justice, equity
- Being compensated by significant or full-time leadership in the church’s ministry is a privilege. The primary concern should be our stewardship of the Gospel and the fulfillment of the Great Ends.
- The biblical value of justice should apply, focusing less on “fairness” (not a biblical value, BTW) and more on what is right. It is not right for congregants to expect pastors to live a subsistence life so they don’t have to. But this should also be balanced against the providence of call and the ethic of sacrificial service.

- Equity, love, care of Luke 10:7, Tim 5:18, Lev 19:13
- I don't really have time to write essays.
- Just compensation guidelines
- Tim 5:18/Luke 10:7 – The worker deserves to be paid. Numbers 7:3-6 – Offerings given to Levites according to their service. Numbers 18:20-21 – similar. Jeremiah 22:13 – Woe to the one who makes his neighbor work for nothing. Theology of economic justice and equality. Expectation of minister to be a full member of the church annually.

Q-8. Do you see the values you mentioned in Q7 at work, and if so how? If not, why do you think they are not influential?

- Godly call has some weight, although there are some who “just do the job.” Stewardship used to be more evenly applied. That has shifted in these economic times.
- Generally yes
- Values at work: local control
- Not much. We have lost our connectionalism. We have forgotten that we as individuals and as congregations need each other to experience God's wideness. So when we think about compensation, each church is only interested in how it can get good leadership and still balance the budget. It has no concern for Bible, theology, or the greater body. Similarly, I think it's interesting that God seems to call pastors to better paying positions every time they move.
- At times. Depends on church. Most use supply/demand market mentality.
- I especially like the way that the BOP puts in annual credits equal to the median income of pastors for those who earn less than median income.
- Each congregation sees its staff as an island. The influence of the national church no longer sets a course for it or anyone else. In a world where athletes and entertainers make millions, the church focuses on our society rather than our generosity for setting our financial standards.
- No. We are all caught up in our own concerns and worlds.
- It is not at work in most churches.
- I think that in the energy to value the ordination and equality of elders in our polity we have lessened the honor and respect we hold for clergy as a lifelong vocation.
- Churches just want to pay minimum.
- Generally yes
- No. Most Presbyterians do not practice tithing, nor are they interested in tithing. But if every family in a congregation practiced tithing, ten families could support a pastor at a salary equal to the average salary of the ten families. Tithing congregations of 50 would easily be able to support a pastor, a full slate of programs and many mission and outreach efforts.
- At times I wonder about the humility we are called to enact when salary packages are very large. I do think PC(USA) has tried to provide a safety net, a standard that helps very much.
- Common assumption is that ministers survive on a different economy than the rest of society.
- Yes, there should be appropriate minimums.
- Pastors aren't valued in the larger community and are taken advantage of within the church.
- Yes and no. I think we strive to approach these values, but as always our aim gets in the way.
- Yes. Some folks are a little resentful that I receive an “exorbitant” salary. Most others see and understand our mutual stake in ministry and see my welfare as a mission of the church.
- They are at work in most situations that I am aware of in our presbytery!
- They are at work, but essentially church employment is driven by market factors. In terms of compensation, biblical values are regarded as idealistic.
- Yes, as we have worked on them intentionally as a church.
- Most congregations of which I have been a part acted in this manner. They try to be supportive of the pastor (and family and [illegible]). If it has not worked, as I have experienced and seen, it is because of people who are too busy or preoccupied to perform as needed.
- I have been told that the male pastors are paid more than the female pastors.
- Yes, frequently – and sometimes no
- Yes. A PNC was willing to hear my needs.

- In many cases declining church membership and shrinking budgets is a function of the failure to proclaim the Gospel clearly and the unwillingness of congregations to adapt when cultural and demographic changes require adaptive change. Mission funds should not be used to subsidize ineffectiveness or deny the need to become more missional.
- I don't witness conversations re: compensation and other business matters of the church framed in such considerations. It's more a matter of "what can we afford?" and "what is this person worth?" These are more familiar and comfortable.
- I don't really have time to write essays.
- An archaic belief that pastors should not be paid that much because they are servants of God. No one looks at the other side of that statement: We are all servants of God. Why are some undeserving of equal compensation?

Q-9. Should these values affect the church's stance toward secular and/or corporate compensation practices?

- Absolutely!
- Yes, but only for those who are poor and taken advantage of.
- Yes – leave secular compensation to the business world.
- Yes and no. Yes because everybody is called to live a life in relationship with Christ and guided by his teachings. It's also wise to reflect on how spending indicates value. No in that the church as an organization is held to different standards than secular corporations. Corporations are not created to help the weak or give sight to the blind.
- Yes
- I'm probably a socialist at heart. I'm glad my congregation is working class and I don't preach to high paid professionals. The greed associated with CEO pay is embarrassing in a country that still has hungry people.
- No. The church should focus on its business, not that of corporations.
- Only in the way it informs and shapes its own people who work in the marketplace.
- Yes
- I think what corporations pay and how they pay and what benefits they offer should reflect the value the corporation places on the life of their employees. For the church to have a stance we should first make sure our church has fair compensation of employees, a fair and honoring lifelong pay/benefits scheme for clergy, and a way to help smaller congregations afford clergy.
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes, but only for those who are poor and taken advantage of.
- What the church pays its pastors has nothing to do with how much corporations pay their employees. Pastors should not be interested in how much money businessmen make. Those who ask this question should take seriously the Lord's words in Luke 12:13-21, specifically this admonition: "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."
- Yes
- Certainly by setting an example itself, the PC(USA) could be a witness to the wider society.
- Yes
- Yes. CEO take a lesson. But this will not happen. Church and state issues will come into play...in our schools for salaries.
- No
- Yes. Everyone deserves to work, be useful, and contribute to society. And everyone deserves a living wage. The church should work for this and stand for this.
- Perhaps. It would depend on the situation.
- Yes and the personnel committees need to be wise, sensitive, and supportive of their church workers to take good care of them.
- Yes
- Yes, as the guiding principles for living on a budget.
- Some who are misguided and misinformed about compensation have sought to regulate in this manner. Better to allow the people involved to do as they perceive is a just manner. Besides, we have lost our prophetic voice in the culture and marketplace.
- Yes, they should.

- Yes
- No. The current mix of corporate and communal values is not a huge problem. Presbyteries already have a communal healthcare and retirement program. In many larger congregations there is already an ethos that has resulted in a closer range of salaries – when compared to the corporate world.
- What does this mean? Another naval gazing waste of time and money to make a statement that no one pays attention to? Enough already with self-justifying pronouncements from the national church. All they do is distract people from the “hands-on” work of the kingdom of God at hand.
- Yes
- I don’t really have time to write essays.
- Yes, but sometimes secular/corporate world is way ahead of the church!
- John’s call for repentance to the business community (represented by tax collectors) in Luke 3:12-13 is a call for ethical treatment/pay of employees and a recognition that there is more to life (and business) than simply the bottom line. His call to public servants (represented by soldiers) in 3:14 is to live within their means, do their job, and not be greedy.

Q-10a. Some in the church have suggested specific ratios between the highest and lowest paid salaries as has been the practice for some GA agencies. Please comment on this idea in the following places:

Within your congregation

- No
- Has no bearing at present.
- Session decision based on duties and responsibilities
- We already do this.
- Ratios are normally a poor method of determining salaries. It is based on a proposition that all are equal in abilities, responsibilities, and situations. It is, to some degree, a disincentive to perform and to progress in your abilities and work. Something similar has been tried in companies and countries and found wanting since it stifles initiative. It’s a poor idea and concept.
- Silly idea. I am the only full-time employee. All others are part-time.
- Bad idea
- For staff maybe. The work of the pastor is a very different quality than administrative or maintenance staff. I guess if there were a master’s level person doing a master’s level job on the staff, then they should be paid equally.
- Good idea
- I’m paid about in the middle of our congregation’s income. My salary total package is above the majority of my members.
- No. No one I know of thinks about these things! GA agencies should pay the rate required to get the very best for the church. Those who work for the denomination should be honored and well paid for it. Don’t make them sacrifice for Christ. They’ll do enough of that on their own.
- I don’t like this because there are so many different factors to consider. A ratio system dictates generalities that are too broad.
- I think this is a good idea in general.
- We struggle with benefits for non-ordained employees.
- I do not think ratios are appropriate.
- Not sure how to do that.
- I don’t know what this means.
- Would probably aid in collegiality.
- Not an issue
- There is only one church staff member in my congregation, so this question is meaningless.
- Never have been a part of a conversation about this in any of these arenas.
- Yes
- Generally an idea worthy of further consideration.
- That would be good among the pastoral staff.
- I don’t see how this would apply.
- We barely make the minimum.

- Broadly done in all categories would be worth consideration.
- No. The distance between pastors' salaries and non-ordained leaders is already less than it could be.
- No!
- Stay out of our business!! We are trying to be the best stewards of the resources entrusted to us. We really don't want your "help."
- May not be same ratio at all congregations.
- I don't really have time to write essays.
- Unofficial guidelines we use
- Not sure

Q10b. Some in the church have suggested specific ratios between the highest and lowest paid salaries as has been the practice for some GA agencies. Please comment on this idea in the following places:

Between ministers in your presbytery

- It could be beneficial, but it needs room for experience and particular congregation/location (i.e., rural NY vs. NYC living expenses).
- Maybe so if based on congregation size.
- Bad idea
- Agree. We all share the same ordination and the same calling. I could understand differences for inexperience, but I think we should financially reward those doing transformation, multicultural, or NCD ministry, not punish them.
- Depends on demands of the work. Yes, but some calls may need to go to part-time status.
- I look at the figures which are published each year. I guess I feel that those who earn so much more than me must be working a lot harder than I do.
- No. No one I know of thinks about these things! GA agencies should pay the rate required to get the very best for the church. Those who work for the denomination should be honored and well paid for it. Don't make them sacrifice for Christ. They'll do enough of that on their own.
- I don't like this because there are so many different factors to consider. A ratio system dictates generalities that are too broad.
- I think this is a good idea in general.
- We still use factoring. It's complicated but it works.
- Good idea
- Maybe so if based on congregation size
- Congregations should be free to pay their pastors according to their pastors' needs, and according to the demands the congregations make on their pastors' time.
- Never have been a part of a conversation about this in any of these arenas.
- Yes
- Generally an idea worthy of further consideration.
- Yes. Think about what would happen if we were paid on an hourly basis instead of salary?
- Don't think we do this.
- I don't see a need for this currently. There's not too much disparity.
- No
- Has no apparent bearing
- There is a fine line between justice and communism. I am not opposed to fairness in pay, but in our polity it is not right to dictate what a congregation pays a pastor if it is fair.
- Not in favor
- Ratios are normally a poor method of determining salaries. It is based on a proposition that all are equal in abilities, responsibilities, and situations. It is, to some degree, a disincentive to perform and to progress in your abilities and work. Something similar has been tried in companies and countries and found wanting since it stifles initiative. It's a poor idea and concept.
- So much of this looks like uninvited micro-management by Presbyterians.
- No. With the exception of one pastor of a 4,000 member church, it's amazing how close the "spread" already is. I do think it's a scandal that some pastors are paid a comfortable, upper-middle class salary while doing such a poor job!

- I do not know.
- This is absurd. You are trying to provide a mathematical solution to a problem that is anything but. Decency and order have their limits.
- May not be same ratio at all congregations.
- I don't really have time to write essays.
- Tough because of different economic demographics of churches.

**10c. Some in the church have suggested specific ratios between the highest and lowest paid salaries as has been the practice for some GA agencies. Please comment on this idea in the following places:
Between staff members of a congregation, in general**

- It would be good to a point.
- Individual congregation's decision
- Bad idea
- For pastors I absolutely think they should be based solely on educational experience, not on the position. Then again, I also don't think there should be one "head-of-staff" pastor or senior pastor and then a bunch of associates. Aren't we ordained to function not status?
- Good idea
- When percentage increases are granted to staff, over the years, the gap between head of staff and associate pastor(s) widens.
- No. No one I know of thinks about these things! GA agencies should pay the rate required to get the very best for the church. Those who work for the denomination should be honored and well paid for it. Don't make them sacrifice for Christ. They'll do enough of that on their own.
- I don't like this because there are so many different factors to consider. A ratio system dictates generalities that are too broad.
- I think this is a good idea in general.
- We still use factoring. It's complicated but it works.
- Good idea
- Individual congregation's decision
- Since different staff members contribute different amounts of time or skill, they should be paid accordingly. Set ratios do not allow people to be compensated appropriately.
- Never have been a part of a conversation about this in any of these arenas.
- Yes
- Generally an idea worthy of further consideration.
- Salary versus hourly again!
- I think we do this.
- Maybe for certain congregations if education and experience is factored in.
- No
- I don't believe this would work and would be very difficult to enforce.
- Good idea for sake of congregation but hard to implement.
- We already do this.
- Ratios are normally a poor method of determining salaries. It is based on a proposition that all are equal in abilities, responsibilities, and situations. It is, to some degree, a disincentive to perform and to progress in your abilities and work. Something similar has been tried in companies and countries and found wanting since it stifles initiative. It's a poor idea and concept.
- So much of this looks like uninvited micro-management by Presbyterians.
- We pay the minimum.
- Wiser leaders pay people fairly.
- Yes, possible and helpful.
- I don't really have time to write essays.
- Yes
- Helpful, especially among fellow ordained staff and other program level staff. Keeps the head of staff from being paid twice what any other employee makes.

**10d. Some in the church have suggested specific ratios between the highest and lowest paid salaries as has been the practice for some GA agencies. Please comment on this idea in the following places:
Between members of a presbytery office staff, in general**

- It could be helpful.
- Each presbytery should decide.
- Bad idea
- Yes. Based on education and experience. But I don't think compensation should be based arbitrarily on position (head vs. associate). It is reasonable to change compensation based on nature of work (white collar, blue collar, leading vs. administrating, etc.)
- Good idea
- Our presbytery exec is so far ahead of everyone else. I can't see this disparity being addressed.
- No
- I don't like this because there are so many different factors to consider. A ratio system dictates generalities that are too broad.
- Again, a good concept
- No comment. Don't know what you are asking.
- Good idea
- Each presbytery should decide.
- Since different staff members contribute different amounts of time or skill, they should be paid accordingly. Set ratios do not allow people to be compensated appropriately.
- Never have been a part of a conversation about this in any of these arenas.
- Yes
- Generally an idea worthy of further consideration.
- Depends upon how well our presbyteries are willing to truly think out of the box...and not just hold workshops...training events...and do nothing with the information...too bad and how sad.
- OK
- Maybe for certain congregations if education and experience is factored in. But who decides? For what reason? Is this "justice" or just "spread the wealth"?
- That is up to the councils and their staffs and GA policies.
- Good idea for sake of congregation but hard to implement.
- No opinion
- Ratios are normally a poor method of determining salaries. It is based on a proposition that all are equal in abilities, responsibilities, and situations. It is, to some degree, a disincentive to perform and to progress in your abilities and work. Something similar has been tried in companies and countries and found wanting since it stifles initiative. It's a poor idea and concept.
- No
- Salaries should not reflect an unspoken philosophy that these type jobs are "above" service in the local church. Too often I think that they do.
- We're just trying to remain solvent.
- Yes, may be helpful.
- I don't really have time to write essays.
- Yes
- Good idea. See comment on Q10c, only more so. [Helpful, especially among fellow ordained staff and other program level staff. Keeps the head of staff from being paid twice what any other employee makes.]

**10e. Some in the church have suggested specific ratios between the highest and lowest paid salaries as has been the practice for some GA agencies. Please comment on this idea in the following places:
Between those working at the national offices (program staff and support staff)**

- It could be helpful.
- Bad idea
- Yes. Education and experience. See above.
- Good idea
- Our presbytery exec is so far ahead of everyone else. I can't see this disparity being addressed.

- No
- I don't like this because there are so many different factors to consider. A ratio system dictates generalities that are too broad.
- Again, a good concept
- No comment
- Good idea
- Since different staff members contribute different amounts of time or skill, they should be paid accordingly. Set ratios do not allow people to be compensated appropriately.
- Never have been a part of a conversation about this in any of these arenas.
- Yes
- Generally an idea worthy of further consideration.
- Depends up how well our presbyteries are willing to truly think out of the box...and not just hold workshops...training events...and do nothing with the information...too bad and how sad.
- OK
- Maybe for certain congregations if education and experience is factored in. But who decides? For what reason? Is this "justice" or just "spread the wealth"?
- That is up to the councils and their staffs and GA policies.
- Good idea for sake of congregation but hard to implement. These are not positions of privilege.
- No opinion
- Ratios are normally a poor method of determining salaries. It is based on a proposition that all are equal in abilities, responsibilities, and situations. It is, to some degree, a disincentive to perform and to progress in your abilities and work. Something similar has been tried in companies and countries and found wanting since it stifles initiative. It's a poor idea and concept.
- Salaries should not reflect an unspoken philosophy that these type jobs are "above" service in the local church. Too often I think that they do.
- I know we are going through bad economic times. I am sorry I do not have enough insight into such matters.
- No
- That's your business.
- Yes, may be helpful.
- I don't really have time to write essays.
- Yes
- Helpful, especially among fellow ordained staff and other program level staff. Keeps the head of staff from being paid twice what any other employee makes.

Q-11. You may be aware that female and racial-ethnic pastors often receive lower compensation than white male pastors, even accounting for differences in experience. Does the PC(USA) have a responsibility to address that inequality? If so, what measures would you suggest?

- Establish a multifaceted range like the compensation handbook as a guide to ensure equitable treatment.
- Compensation based on experience as well as position
- Recommend equality, but not legislate it
- This has a lot to do with the fact that large, rich, white churches will only call white, male pastors. (God seems a little too predictable in that.) If the PC(USA) is going to respond to the changing world in the 21st century, we're going to need to figure this multicultural thing out. There is no other option. If that is where our heart really is, then that is where our treasure needs to be. So, maybe enact maximums so that large, rich, white churches don't get all the experienced pastors and create incentives (grants, subsidies) so that experienced pastors can afford to serve small, dying, or minority congregations. My wife is also a pastor and she is serving a small, multicultural, bi-lingual congregation that is growing. It was not growing when she started four years ago. So, a presbytery level and a GA level grant were the only way the church could afford her. Today the church is almost off grant, has doubled in size, and has balanced its budget self-sufficiently. Her leadership (though expensive) is what allowed God's spark to catch.
- By surveys and releasing the information objectively. Truth is, I wouldn't be having any salary or job if this congregation had to meet standards beyond presbytery minimums. But information creates a healthy pressure to redress inequities.

- Be aggressive. Talk to COMs and exec. pres. to address it.
- Again, education and guidance
- Based on need, not individualism or our capitalist system.
- As long as the PC(USA) remains a free market economy, we cannot really address this. People will look at the size of the church, years in ministry, size or budget. So the compensation is a glass ceiling problem.
- By sharing the cost across the board so that compensations are “just” and not so unequal. I have experienced this myself as a female pastor.
- Address this inequity as it relates to the biblical version of the year of Jubilee and its call for a redistribution of capital and a level economic playing field (or paying) field!
- Perhaps compensation should be determined by a percent of the overall budget size.
- Yes. Some of these congregations are only able to offer a lower amount. What about offering the pastor an additional week off including a Sunday to show their support and appreciation! What a boost that would be for the pastor receiving such a thing.
- This is outrageous. The church must demand pastors be treated equally without regard to gender.
- Well, recently I met a pastor who willingly has taken a very low salary below minimum and was able to do so by contracting for 19 hours a week. Also, she is not in the BOP. That was her choice because she feels called to this ministry in a church of 40 members. Sometimes it is a pastor’s call and sometimes it is the church situation. I think presbytery needs to look at each situation, considering both church and pastor. Presbytery should also assist as possible such ministry if deemed viable by COM and presbytery as a whole.
- In the 21st century world, I suspect this is less because of racism or sexism, and more about the size of churches these pastors are serving. Minimum compensation guidelines are effective in these cases.
- Through COM with sessions to help make these concerns just and loving!
- Too broad. It all depends how. I’d be cautious.
- Presbyteries should be the entity that addresses it within their boundaries and by the COM. Let them work with congregations in a humble and patient way to bring about adequate compensation. Top down “legislation” has or can have a negative influence being from a remote entity. If GA wants to give any help, let it be the counsel and encouragement to Presbyteries to work on this issue itself.
- Unsure. It is something that minimum standards and the call process in each case needs to work out. In many of these cases it involves small, barely sustainable congregations, which is another issue.
- Fairness should be practiced when giving call to a pastor.
- Presbyteries holding congregations accountable.
- Only when a new church is being planted or merged should mission funds be used to subsidize salaries.
- In the materials provided to PNCs this kind of data should be shared. Mandating anything would be counter-productive.
- Only to the extent of encouraging congregations to consider Luke 10:7, Tim 5:18.
- I don’t really have time to write essays.
- Yes, but can’t legislate it.
- Same as corporations that struggle with this. Have presbyteries do a better job of reviewing terms of call compared to previous minister, other staff at that church, and similar positions in that geographical area. Make churches be accountable for fair compensation by informing them what is fair and then making sure they follow up.

Q-12. What questions have we not asked or would you suggest for our task force to consider? Other comments or recommendations/suggestions?

- Use the money spent on this task force to subsidize NCD pastors in strategic areas.
- I have a six-week sabbatical coming up next year. BOP is contributing \$3,000 towards the cost. I love the four week vacation, two week study leave, two family weekends policy of our presbytery. What are trade-offs (flexible time, time off) to salary compensation for small church pastors – underwriting the pastors’ Sabbath, etc.?
- What agencies and programs that act as regulatory agencies for the church and our society can be cut, done away with so that those dollars may go to support mission and evangelism?
- Thank you for asking the questions. We are struggling. God is providing, but the struggle is real!
- None at this time.

- You're really in two different areas: Clergy compensation – how should it work and what's fair; and employee compensation – which should be tied to the secular market. Clergy compensation is two large questions. 1) Tie to free market 2) Base on years of service with adjustments for church complexity or other factors. Good luck with #2. America likes its free market. I'd like someone to write a thoughtful guide for sessions about how not to balance a church budget on the back of the pastor. In 30 years I've never seen a church budget that didn't do a final adjustment to terms of call in order to "balance."
- A pastor is called by God by the Spirit to labor in the gospel ministry. Worldly compensation should not be either a motivation or a hindrance to that calling. The reason a congregation compensates a pastor is so that he or she might be "free from worldly cares and avocations," and thus able adequately to fulfill pastoral duties. The amount of the compensation should thus be whatever the congregation and pastor agree upon and which is approved by the Presbytery. There is no need for further study of these matters. There is certainly no need for the Presbyterian Church to entertain Marxist ideas.
- This issue is a great opportunity to creatively and imaginatively and practically implement Jesus' prime kingdom directive (the year of Jubilee) of Luke 4.
- Not sure, but I think that it is time for this denomination to begin to stop rationalizing and being negative about what non-denominations are doing and start to look at what is at the core of why they are growing and we are not!
- Our health insurance stinks! That's part of compensation too. But Blue Cross contests everything from prescriptions to tests.
- Are these questions being asked to make pastors feel guilty about how much they make, or jealous about how much they don't make?
- Perhaps explore what Reformed churches in other developed nations do, not to mimic them, but perhaps get a sense of how they are facing the challenges of providing for their clergy in a time of losses in membership (i.e., Netherlands, Scotland, etc., since these folks are not paid from the roles as in Germany or Switzerland).
- Medical insurance benefits differ from state to state. Being in the upper peninsula of Michigan my benefits are not as good as they were when I was in Louisville.
- Greater exposure to the modest salaries of pastors/church workers in the developing world will help everyone put their focus on becoming more effective with Gospel proclamation and discovering contentment whatever the economic circumstances.
- I'm sorry I don't have the time necessary to reflect and comment on my answers.
- Pastors historically made similar amounts to doctors and lawyers up to 1940s. See Wuthnow sociological research on stewardship for good data.
- My suggestion is that you read carefully, keeping in mind how many congregations struggle and worry about their future. And how much of a church budget goes toward compensating staff.
- None