

PCUSA Membership Analysis

Presbyterian Churches U.S.A. Membership Comparison

	2005	2020	Decrease in Membership	Increase in Membership
Presbyterian Church (USA)	2,451,654	1,302,043	(1,149,611)	
Reformed Church in America	171,361	138,438	(32,923)	
Cumberland Presbyterian Church	84,417	70,810	(13,607)	
Cumberland Presb. Church in America	15,142			
United Church of Christ	1,359,105	802,256	(556,849)	
Presbyterian Church in America	254,676	384,793		130,117
Christian Reformed Church	137,375	222,156		84,781
Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church	35,556	39,681		4,125
Evangelical Presbyterian Church	64,156	145,000		80,844
Korean Presbyterian Church	51,100	55,000		3,900
Hungarian Reformed Church in America	6,000	6,080		80
Orthodox Presbyterian Church	18,746	31,112		12,366
Reformed Presbyterian Church	4,363	7,076		2,713
Reformed Church in the U.S.	3,258	3,033	(225)	
ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical		121,000		121,000
TOTAL	4,656,909	3,328,478	(1,753,215)	439,926

Our Starting Place as People of God in the Reformed Tradition

1. God Created Us and Gave Us the Gift of our Sexuality.
2. God Created Us Male and Female.
3. God Created Us To Be Together.
4. God Created Us To Grow and Change.
5. God Created Us To Love.
6. God Created Us To Share in Creation.
7. God Continues to Care for Us.



Teaching Our Children About Sexuality

1. Parents are the primary educators.
2. Children need to have accurate and clear information at the appropriate age level.
3. Open communication makes for healthier children.
4. Girls and boys need information about both males and females.
5. Sexuality education needs to center on the goodness of the gift of sexuality.
6. Sexuality education needs to include information about the misuse of sexuality.



**What Children Will Benefit
by Knowing**


Infants and Toddlers (0-2 Years)

Prereaders (3-6 Years)

Resource: In God's Image

by Janet Neff Brewer (1998)

Infants and Toddlers (0-2 Years) Will Benefit by Knowing:

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1. The correct names for some of their visible body parts-nose, ears, eyes, penis.
 2. Their entire body is natural and healthy.
 3. It is permissible to touch all the parts of their body.
 4. Their body is their own.
 5. The concept of maleness and femaleness.
 6. Their touching all the parts of their own body makes them feel good.
 7. Their parents love them, will respond to their needs, and will listen to them and talk to them.

Building On Previous Understandings, Prereaders (3-6 Years) Will Benefit by Knowing:

1. How to take care of their bodies (basic hygiene, eating habits, the need for sleep).
2. Their maleness and femaleness is a good part of their lives. They are created by God to be sexual beings.
3. Sexuality is something they can talk about at home with their families. All questions will be answered. There are no forbidden topics.
4. All family members have a need for privacy. Children sometimes need to be by themselves. Parents and other family members sometimes need to be by themselves.

Building On Previous Understandings, Prereaders (3-6 Years) Will Benefit by Knowing:

5. Massaging the penis, clitoris, and other sexual parts of the body is acceptable. The acceptable time and place is alone in a private setting.
6. Their bodies belong to them, and they have a right and responsibility to say no to any unwanted touch. This right to say no includes saying no even to family members.
7. A simple explanation of how babies are born.
8. A simple explanation of how babies are conceived.
9. Their parents love them, will respond to their needs, and will listen and talk to them.



What Children Will Benefit by Knowing

Children in Grades 2-3

**Resource: Wonderfully
Made: God's Plan for
Growing Up**

**by Rev. Woody Berry and Dr.
Sandra Elizabeth Fields
Seymour (1998)**



What Children Will Benefit by Knowing

Children in Grades 4-5

**Resource: Amazing Stuff:
God's Plan for Growing Up**

**by Dr. Sandra Elizabeth
Fields Seymour and Rev.
Woody Berry (1998)**

Chapter Outline of God's Plan for Growing up

Chapter One: God Created Us To Be Together

Chapter Two: God Created Us Male and Female

Second/Third Grade Emphasis on the Differences
in Males and Females

Fourth/Fifth Grade Emphasis on Male and Female
Equality and Relationships

Chapter Outline of God's Plan for Growing up

Chapter Three: God Created Us To Grow and Change

Second/Third Grade Emphasis on Body Changes in Adolescence

Fourth/Fifth Grade Emphasis on Feelings Associated with
Body Changes

Chapter Four: God Created Us To Love

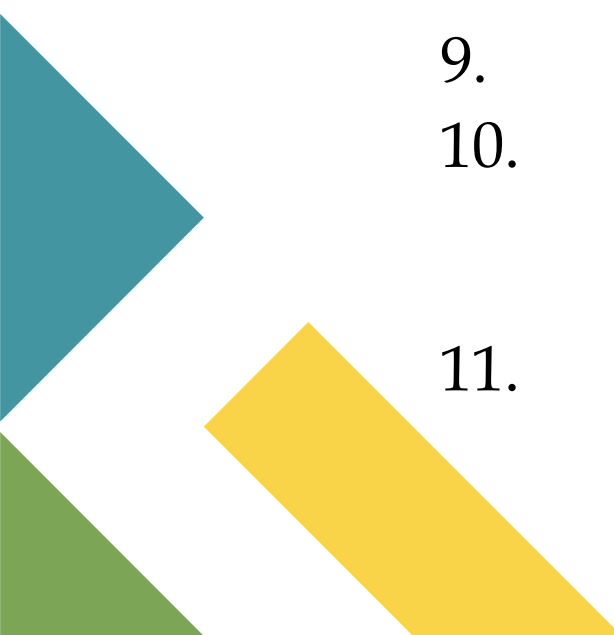
Second/Third Grade Emphasis on Feelings

Fourth/Fifth Grade Emphasis on Friendship

Building On Previous Understandings, Children in Grades 2-3 Will Benefit by Knowing:

1. They are God's good creation, all of who they are, including their sexuality.
2. God's creation is diverse-no two are exactly alike.
3. The purpose of a family is to love and care for one another.
4. Males and females are created equally in God's image. They are not limited by their gender.
5. The correct names for the visible body parts-penis, scrotum, testicles, labia, clitoris, urethra, vagina.
6. What circumcision is.

Building On Previous Understandings, Children in Grades 2-3 Will Benefit by Knowing:

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7. The changes in a girl's body at puberty growth in height; growth of pubic hair and hair on legs and underarms; development and growth of breasts; and the beginning of menstrual periods.
 8. The internal body parts related to menstrual periods-cervix, uterus.
 9. What to do when a menstrual period begins.
 10. The changes in a boy's body at puberty growth in height; growth of pubic, body, and facial hair; vocal changes; and the beginning of wet dreams.
 11. What causes wet dreams, including the correct names-sperm, semen.

Building On Previous Understandings, Children in Grades 2-3 Will Benefit by Knowing:

12. What to do when a wet dream happens.
13. What marriage is.
14. How a man and woman express love in marriage, including a basic description of how sexual intercourse happens.
15. The basic steps in creation of a baby sexual intercourse, the meeting of the sperm from a male and egg in a woman.
16. How to take care of their bodies nutrition, exercise, rest, health check-ups, avoiding drugs.
17. What is abuse-physical, emotional, and sexual-and how to protect themselves from abuse.

Building On Previous Understandings, Children in Grades 4-5 Will Benefit by Knowing:

1. The importance of covenant relationships based on love, justice, and forgiveness.
2. The concept of diversity in roles (males can prepare food, females can mow grass).
3. The idea of sexual attraction.
4. The meaning of heterosexuality and homosexuality.
5. The term masturbation.
6. Qualities of friendship-communication, honesty, listening, sharing time, disclosing feelings.
7. Appropriate ways to express feelings of sexual attraction.

Building On Previous Understandings, Children in Grades 4-5 Will Benefit by Knowing:

8. An understanding of teenage pregnancy.
9. The meaning of peer pressure.
10. What STD's (Sexually Transmitted Diseases), and AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) are.
11. Specific steps in conception of a baby sexual intercourse, development of the embryo, growth of fetus, and birth



What Youth Will Benefit by Knowing

Younger and Older Youth

**Resource: God's Gift of
Sexuality**

**Editor for Revised Edition
David M. Dobson (1998)**

Building On Previous Understandings, Younger Youth Curriculum includes:

Session 1: Sexuality Redefined

Session 2: Sensuality

Session 3: Intimacy

Session 4: Sexual Identity

Session 5: Good Health Habits

Session 6: Contraception

Session 7: Sexually Transmitted Infections

Building On Previous Understandings, Older Youth Curriculum includes:

Session 1: Anatomy and Physiology

Session 2: Puberty

Session 3: Relationships and Intimacy

Session 4: The Consequences of Sex

Session 5: Sexual Violence

Session 6: Values and Decisions

Session 7: Parent/Youth Communication

Building On Previous Understandings, Younger Youth Curriculum includes:

Session 8: Parenthood

Session 9: Sexualism

Session 10: Decision Making

Session 11: Building Blocks for Better Parent/Youth Communication

Other Sexuality Education Resources:

Sex and Faith: Talking with Your Child from Birth to Adolescence by Kate Ott

- Our Whole Lives: Sexuality Education for Gr K-1
- Our Whole Lives: Sexuality Education for Gr 4-6
- Our Whole Lives: The Parent Guide

GUIDE FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A) (1998)

- This guide is compiled from the Scriptures and from several documents that have been endorsed as setting forth the understandings of recent General Assemblies. Included also are statements from *The Book of Confessions*.

GUIDE FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A) (1998)

HUMAN SEXUALITY

Why Were We Created as Sexual Beings?

We were created as sexual beings so that we could be in relationships and community with one another and with God. Our sexuality allows for intimacy and allows us to be co-creators with God (Doc. 8, pp. 7, 11). See also Gen. 1:27-31; 2:18-25.

Were We Created as Sexual Beings for the Purpose of Procreation?

We are sexual beings, first, for the purpose of relating to one another, and second, for the purpose of procreation (Doc. 8, p. 7). See also Gen. 2:18-35.

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In What Ways Should We Express Our Sexuality?

Our sexuality should be expressed in ways that are loving, self-expressive, creative, faithful, sensitive to the needs of others, honest, self-giving, socially responsible, joyful, and patient . (Doc. 8, p. 11). See also Gen. 5:22-23.

When Do We Become Sexual Beings?

We are sexual beings from the moment of creation. No matter the age, state of development, or level of health, we are all sexual beings (Doc. 8, p. 3; Doc. 7, lines 79-88). See also Gen. 1:27-31. PC(USA) (1992), as printed in the Minutes of the 204th General Assembly, pp. 357-377.

GUIDE FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A) (1998)

Does Our Church Advocate Sex Education in the Schools?

We support sexuality education programs in families, churches, schools, and private and public agencies (Doc. 10, p. 60).

Equality of Men and Women In the Genesis 2 Creation Story,
Woman Is Created After Man. Does This Mean Woman Is Subordinate to Man? No, woman is not subordinate, but rather, she completes Creation. She is created in equality and solidarity with man (Doc. 8, p. 7). See also Gen. 1:27-31; 2:18-25.

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What Does Our Church Say about Equality?

In sovereign love, God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God's image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community (Doc. 12, lines 29-32). See also Gen. 1:1-2:25; 5:1-32.

What Does Our Church Say about Equality in Church Life?

We affirm in the strongest possible terms that the body of Christ is made up of women and men.' God calls both women and men to ministries in the life of the church. Any attempt to silence or marginalize any voices is not worthy of Christ's body (Doc. 13, p. 90).

GUIDE FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A) (1998)

What Does Our Church Believe about Contraception?

We believe any person who is physically capable of reproduction should have complete knowledge about contraceptives. We favor the general availability of contraceptive devices to persons who desire them. We consciously include the availability of contraceptives to unmarried persons in this recommendation (Doc. 3, p. 21; Doc. 10, p. 60).

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Does Our Church Support In Vitro Fertilization?

We affirm in vitro fertilization as a responsible alternative for couples for whom there is no other way to bear children, and oppose state or local legislation that would prohibit in vitro fertilization (Doc. 9, p. 26).

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What Is Premarital Sex?

Premarital sex means different things to different people. It can mean sexual intercourse that occurs as the result of a deliberate, thought-out act or just a spur-of-the-moment action. It could happen with an acquaintance, a friend, or a fiancée. It might occur during the course of a long-term relationship or on a casual date (Doc. 8, p. 16).

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Should Teenagers Have Sexual Intercourse Before Marriage?

We believe it is best to postpone intercourse until marriage. If a teenage couple decide to have a sexual relationship, they have the responsibility to use effective contraception (Doc. 10, p. 51; Doc. 8, p. 16). See also Gen. 2:18-25.

What Does Our Church Believe about Premarital Sex?

We believe that total intimacy should happen in a relationship of total commitment, which marriage is intended to be. We advocate responsible behavior, understood as sexual expression that matches the seriousness and permanence of the relationship (Doc. 3, p. 29; Doc. 8, p. 16). See also Gen. 2:18-25.

GUIDE FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A) (1998)

If We Teach Young People about Contraception, Doesn't This Really Give Young People Permission to Engage in Sexual Intercourse?

No, young people should postpone sexual activity until marriage. Yet, in light of the number of teenage pregnancies that do occur, we would be failing in our ministry if we did not offer young people good contraceptive information (Doc. 10, p. 51).

Does Giving Young People Information about Contraception Lead to Greater Sexual Activity?

The most recent research shows that presentation of information about contraception serves both to delay the onset of sexual activity and to reduce its frequency (Doc. 10, p. 51).

GUIDE FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A) (1998)

What Options Does Our Church Offer a Pregnant Teenager Who Is Not Married?

The church offers the options of (1) marriage; (2) offering the child for adoption; (3) single parenthood; and (4) abortion (Doc. 10, pp. 50-51).

Can the Choice of Abortion Be a Responsible Christian Choice?

In the exceptional case in which a woman is pregnant and judges that it would be irresponsible to bring a child into the world, given the limitations of her situation, it can be an act of faithfulness before God to intervene in the natural process of pregnancy and terminate it. Abortion may be considered a responsible and morally acceptable choice within the Christian faith when serious genetic problems arise or when the resources are not adequate to care for a child appropriately (Doc. 10, p. 58; Doc. 9, p. 10; Doc. 10, p. 32; Doc. 14, pp. 367-368).

GUIDE FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A) (1998)

What Is Our Primary Guide in Decision Making?

We can trust in God's Spirit to guide us in our decisions. We are part of the community of faith, and we can be sure that the community will be here to help and sustain us in our decisions. Furthermore, the gospel reminds us again and again of God's grace, which brings us love, care, and forgiveness (Doc. 10, p. 58). See also Rom. 8.

Who Has the Responsibility for Deciding about Abortion?

Biblical faith emphasizes the need for personal moral choice. Each individual is ultimately accountable to God for individual moral choices. The choice for an abortion is to be made by the woman who is in the position to make the decision, and it is, above all, her responsibility (Doc. 10, pp. 58, 60; Doc 14, pp. 367-368).

GUIDE FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A) (1998)

When Should a Decision about Abortion Be Made?

A decision about abortion should be made as early as possible, generally within the first three months of the pregnancy. Abortions in the second three months are an option for those who do not discover they are pregnant until then, or for those who discover grave genetic disorders, or for those who have not had access to medical care during the first three months (Doc. 10, p. 59).

Should Abortion Be Available to Anyone Who Chooses It?

Our church believes we have a responsibility to guarantee every woman the freedom to choose for herself. Abortion should be made available to all who desire and qualify for it, not just to those who can afford it (Doc. 10, p. 60; Doc 14, pp. 367-368).

GUIDE FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A) (1998)

Should a Woman Feel Guilty for Considering an Abortion?

A woman who considers abortion and then decides to continue her pregnancy should never be made to feel guilty that she has thought about abortion. It is far better to give birth intentionally than to feel that the diagnosis of pregnancy constitutes an absolute obligation to bear a child. In most pregnancies, the question of abortion will never arise, but when it does, the choice of abortion can be an expression of responsibility before God (Doc. 9, p. 10; Doc. 10, p. 32).

Should Abortion Be Considered a Form of Birth Control?

Abortion is not and should not be used as a form of birth control. It should not be chosen as a convenience or to ease embarrassment. It is a very serious and far-reaching decision (Doc. 11, p. 80; Doc 14, pp. 367-368).

GUIDE FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A) (1998)

What Does Our Church Believe the Public Policy on Abortion Should Be?

We believe in Christian freedom and responsibility so that individuals can make their own choices, rather than have the state make decisions for them. We believe in a public policy of elective abortion, regulated by the health code, not the criminal code (Doc. 10, p. 52; Doc 14, pp. 367-368).

What Does Our Church Believe about Violence at Women's Health Clinics?

Our church condemns violence and threats of violence at women's health clinics, and encourages individuals to use language and images responsibly to avoid stimulation or encouraging violence or appearing to condone violent behavior (Doc. 15, pp. 678-679).

GUIDE FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A) (1998)

Are there Varieties of Beliefs about Abortion within Our Church?

Yes, there is a great variety of beliefs, and those who hold these varying beliefs tend to hold them very strongly. It is for this reason that our church has been led to the conviction that the decision regarding abortion must remain with the individual, to be made on the basis of conscience and personal religious principles (Doc. 10, p. 60).

Closing Litany

Leader: We are God's work of art created in Jesus Christ.

People: In sovereign love, God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God's image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one in community.

Leader: So God created humankind in God's own image, in the image of God was the human being created; male and female God created them. And God saw everything that God made, and behold it was very good.

Closing Litany

People: Life is a gift to be received with gratitude and a task to be pursued with courage.

Leader: Not only did God create us, but God created us in God's own image. All that we are, including our bodies, including our sexuality, is God's gift to us. We have been made to reflect God's goodness, wisdom, and love.

Closing Litany

All: Our sexuality is our way of being male and female in the world. Our sexuality is basic and affects our thoughts, feelings, and actions. Because our sexuality is called good by God, because it is God's gift to us, and because we are made in the image of God, we can feel good about our sexuality! Amen.



Thank you!

**Blythe Denham Kieffer, D.Min.
and Peter S. Kieffer, M.D.**