

1. Title: Special Offerings

2. Purpose:

The Book Of Order (2011-2013) G-3.0205 Finances states "it (the session) shall authorize offerings for Christian purposes and shall account for the proceeds of such offerings and their disbursement. It shall provide full information to the congregation concerning its decisions in such matters." The purpose of this OPS is to provide church policy and procedures for this Book of Order requirement.

Individuals and congregations continually seek ways to support mission that makes God's love present to people around the world. In addition to regular giving, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has created four church-wide opportunities each year called Special Offerings to support specific causes. The focuses of the offerings correspond with the season of the liturgical year or special days of the church calendar: the Christmas Joy Offering is generally received the Sunday before Christmas; One Great Hour of Sharing on Easter Sunday; the Pentecost Offering on the day of Pentecost; and Peacemaking Offering on World Communion Sunday. All the ministries supported by these offerings represent priorities lifted up by the denomination.

*"The four churchwide Special Offerings of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) play an important role in defining what it means to be a connectional church in the twenty-first century, bringing together the diversity of the PC(USA) to focus and take faith-based action on shared concerns. The Offerings offer opportunities for partnership, learning, and witness and profoundly affect the life of the church as a collective witness to Jesus Christ's love for the whole church."*ⁱ

The Christmas Joy Offering has been a Presbyterian tradition for more than 70 years. Its proceeds benefit active and retired workers of the church in times of need and also support the work of racial ethnic Presbyterian schools and colleges. Since 1949 One Great Hour of Sharing has helped people in need around the world. The offering supports Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Self-Development of People and the Presbyterian Hunger Program. Congregations are encouraged to retain 40% of the Pentecost Offering for local work with children at risk. The remaining 60% is shared among ministries with youth and young adults, young adult mission volunteers and child advocacy. The Peacemaking Offering is distributed among local congregations (25%), presbyteries and synod (25%) and the general Assembly (50%) for peacemaking efforts. The offering is received on World Communion Sunday, the Sunday in October.

The church (FPCC) has its own ministries ("other Christian purposes") where a Special Offering may be justifiable. The Mission Ministry is responsible for any such ministries. This OPS provides for the approval of Special Offerings for both denominational as well as church ministries. The objective is to provide policies and procedures for selecting both denominational and church-sponsored causes/ministries for Special Offerings.

3. Policy:

1. The Presbyterian denominational Special Offerings for the *Christmas Joy Offering* and for the *One Great Hour of Sharing Offering* shall be standing Session-approved Special Offerings.

2. The Missions Ministry shall be responsible for annually recommending to the Session any non-standing Special Offerings for the upcoming calendar year and the dates for conducting both the standing and non-standing Special offerings.
3. There shall be no specific Special Offering conducted without the Session's approval of such offering. Once a special offering is approved and placed on the Church Calendar, it is understood that the offering will be conducted at each worship service on the specified date.
4. There shall be no more than four (4) special offerings per year and no more than one Special Offering in any quarter. There may be fewer than four (4) special offerings per year at the Session's discretion.
5. The Missions Ministry shall be responsible for coordinating all special offerings including both denominationally-sponsored and FPCC-sponsored. This includes providing materials such as envelopes and publicity for Special Offerings and advising the ushers, offering counters and bookkeepers prior to any Special Offering's date.
6. Special Offering shall be placed on the Church's Calendar for the most appropriate date based on the request and other happenings.
7. Any contribution received from an individual for a special offering shall not be credited toward that individual's stewardship pledge due to the church's financial planning requirements.
8. The Missions Ministry is responsible for reviewing and revising this OPS.

4. Definitions:

Special Offering: the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has created four church-wide opportunities each year called Special Offerings to support specific causes and which are planned for specific Sundays. The scope of this OPS includes in this definition as well, any FPCC Mission Ministry-offering for a specific cause.

5. References:

- Book Of Order (2011-2013) G-3.0205 *Finances*
- Session's meeting minutes dated February 16, 2014

6. Applicability:

This OPS applies for all Special Offerings as defined in paragraph 4. *Definitions*.

7. Procedures:

1. The Mission Ministry shall plan for the next year's Special Offerings.
2. The Chairperson of the Mission Ministry shall request the Clerk to schedule the consideration of the Special Offering plan on the Session's agenda.
3. The Missions Ministry Chairperson shall present the Special Offerings plan for discussion and approval at the Session meeting.
4. The Missions Ministry's Chairperson shall coordinate with the Church Administrator for adding the approved Special Offerings on the Church Calendar.
5. The Missions Ministry Chairperson shall coordinate with the Church Administrator for the publicity and arrange for materials for any session-approved Special Offering.
6. The Missions Ministry Chairperson shall obtain the total for the amount of the offering received and report this amount to the Session at the next Session meeting and coordinate publishing the amount in the *Weekly Connection*. This report shall include the percentage and amounts both forwarded to Presbytery or elsewhere and kept for local distribution.

8. Review Schedule:

This OPS shall be reviewed for revision triennially by the Missions Ministry.

9. Approval:

Session approved the revision of this OPS on the above stated date.

ⁱ Presbyterian Mission – presbyterianmission.org