

Pointers for Completing the 2018 Annual Statistical Report

You can now begin entering your 2018 church statistics at this link: <http://oga.pcusa.org/stats> . You have until Thursday, February 14, 2019, to enter statistics; that is the absolute final date and I'm sorry that I can't offer any extensions. Remember to factor in time for your session to review and approve the completed statistics after December 31, 2018.

There are numerous changes this year in the statistical reporting, as a result of General Assembly action designed to clarify and simplify the questions. So here are some useful pointers:

- I strongly encourage you to read the Frequently Asked Questions at the bottom of the page at the link above before beginning your work, and also to check out each page of statistics you'll be asked to provide before beginning to enter any.
- I have your church's current User ID and Password in case you need that to get started. Just call the presbytery office and either Tom Oxley or I can provide that.
- There is no separate instructional workbook this year. Instead each question of the statistics report has detailed instructions just to the left of where you fill in the data. You should find it helpful not to have to page back and forth from a workbook to the form, and instead have your explanation alongside the question. I can help you interpret that if you're not sure what to enter.
- Note that this year you have two different sets of questions:
 - A **Statistics** section that you are required to respond to and that I will monitor closely to make sure you fill them all out, and
 - A set of optional questions called **Supplemental Questions**. Some of these Supplemental Questions used to be required but now you can decide whether to respond. I encourage you to answer these Supplemental Questions if you possibly can, even though they are not mandatory.
- Be aware that on the Membership Statistics page, the first question invites you to insert a new Starting Membership number as of the beginning of 2018 if there was an error in the previous year reporting. That may be helpful in correcting mistakes and making the gains and losses you report for 2018 balance to the correct active member number at year-end 2018. Please note that for calculating per capita and Connectional Support payments for future years, we will use the actual reported number from last year (Beginning Membership) rather than any corrected number you may add this year (New Starting Membership).
- Missing from the reporting this year is the need to report numbers of Baptized members and Affiliate members. I know some of you will be happy to see those removed, since they were often confusing. But please remember that the current Rolls and Registers that the Book of Order requires (G-3.0204(a) and (b)) still need to be maintained, even if the numbers don't need to be reported annually.
- When you enter data on any page, remember to hit "Accept" at the bottom of that page to save what you've done. You can always go back later and add more data or change what you've already entered. That opportunity to change things will end for you on February 14, 2019. After that only I can make changes in your report, and just for a short while. So I encourage you not to wait until the last minute to complete the report and get your session's approval.

- Do not “Submit” on the final screen until you’re sure all the data have been entered, that they are all correct, and that your session has approved the report. After you “Submit” you cannot go back and change anything—only I can do that, and for a brief time.

I suspect you will have questions, so please let me know if you need help figuring this out. The intent is to make things simpler—but sometimes it just does not work that way. I am very grateful for your faithful work on this and for the support from others in your church who help generate the information you report.

Blessings and peace,

Larry

Ruling Elder Larry Hollar
Stated Clerk
Presbytery of the Miami Valley