

The
Presbyterian
Panel
*Listening to
Presbyterians*

**2003 – 2005
Background Report**



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The Presbyterian Panel

Listening to Presbyterians



REPORT

BACKGROUND REPORT FOR THE 2003–2005 PRESBYTERIAN PANEL

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Overview

This *Report* profiles Presbyterians *as a people*, describing them as a faith community (beliefs, church backgrounds, and levels of church involvement) and as a social and demographic community (age, sex, marital status, living arrangements, etc.). Using scientific sampling, small but representative numbers of members, elders, and ordained ministers were contacted by mail and asked to answer a set of questions about themselves and their congregations. The results provide a broad look at the 2.5 million members, 110,000 elders, and 14,000 active ordained ministers who are part of the 11,100 congregations that make up the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The first part of this *Report* highlights a variety of survey findings, using text and figures. A longer “Data Appendix” presents comparative tables that display percentage responses to every question separately for members, elders, and active ordained ministers. In the appendix tables and most other analyses, ministers are divided into two groups: *pastors*, serving congregations, and *specialized clergy*, serving elsewhere.

The Presbyterian Panel began in 1973 in the United Presbyterian Church in the USA, and continued after that body’s reunion with the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. in 1983 created the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Over its 30-year history, approximately 150 surveys have been conducted under the Panel aegis on a variety of topics of interest to the General Assembly, its committees, and other national church entities.

The Panel is re-sampled, or “re-established,” every three years. The first survey to new panelists is designed to provide a broad picture of the people who comprise the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This *Report* presents the findings from individuals asked to be part of The Presbyterian Panel for the 2003 – 2005 period. In October 2002, 5,853 Presbyterians were sent an initial questionnaire, inviting them to complete and return it, and in so doing to become part of the Panel for the next three years. A postcard reminder was sent to all sampled individuals on October 1, 2002, followed by two subsequent reminders to non-respondents on November 22 (including a replacement copy of the questionnaire) and December 13. Final response rates, by sample, are: members, 56%; elders, 76%; and ordained ministers, 65%.

Panelists had the option to complete the survey on the Web, and 6% of members, 10% of elders, and 9% of ministers did so.

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

The results reported in these pages are subject to sampling and other errors. As a general guide, percentage differences between samples of 8% or less should be ignored because they may not reflect actual differences in the overall populations from which the samples were drawn.

For detailed information on sampling and other methodological aspects of the Panel re-establishment process, see the Technical Appendix at the end of this *Report*.

Church Activities and Involvement

Church Background

- ✓ Only a minority of members (45%) and elders (44%) were raised in a Presbyterian church, while 63% of pastors and 65% of specialized clergy grew up Presbyterian.
- ✓ More than three of every four members (76%) and elders (80%) belonged to another congregation before becoming a member of the Presbyterian congregation where they now belong. In four of every ten transfers, the immediately prior church was also Presbyterian. In around one in six transfers, the most recent previous church was Methodist, and in one in ten, it was Baptist.
- ✓ Members joined their current congregation a median of 13 years ago; elders, 17 years ago.
- ✓ A third of members (33%) and elders (33%) and a majority of pastors (53%) and specialized clergy (54%) began attending a Presbyterian congregation prior to their sixth birthday. The median age at which panelists began attending a Presbyterian church ranges from 4 years for specialized clergy and 5 years for pastors to 18 years for both members and elders.
- ✓ Members and elders live a median distance of three miles from their church.
- ✓ The median size of congregations in which pastors were raised is 400 members.

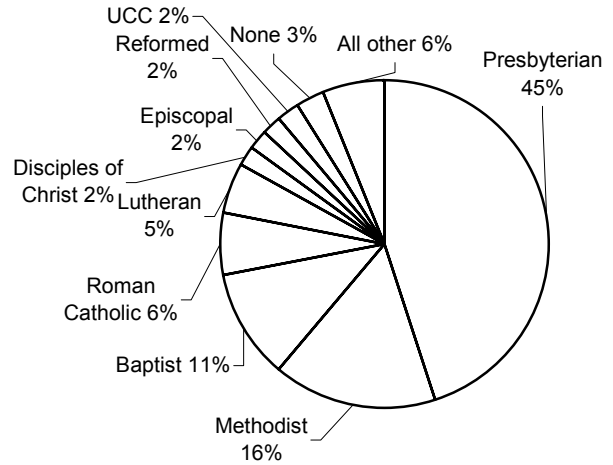


Figure 1
Religious Background of Members

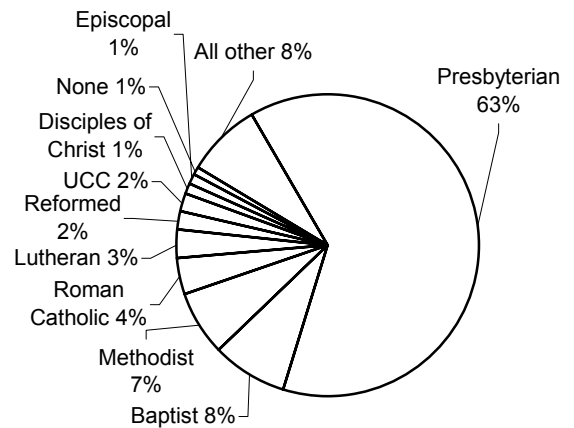


Figure 2
Religious Background of Pastors

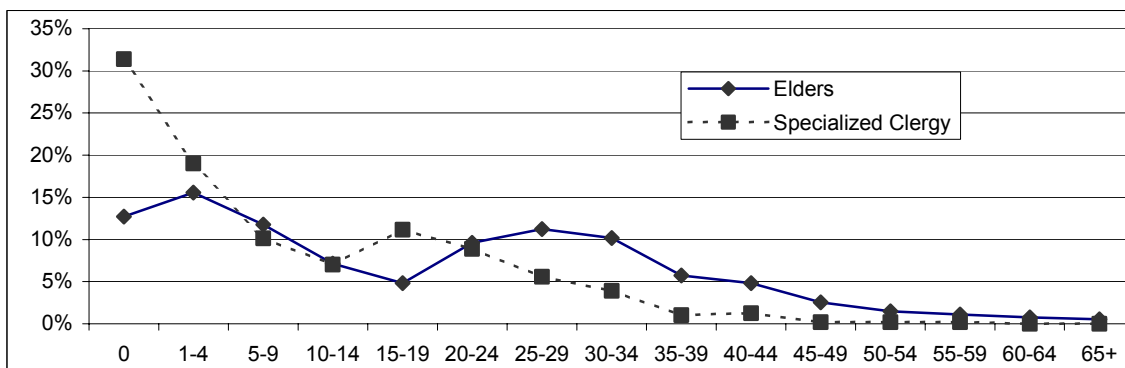


Figure 3
Age at which Elders and Specialized Clergy Began Attending a Presbyterian Church

Church Activities and Involvement

Church Attendance and Other Religious Participation

- ✓ More than six in ten members (62%) report attending Sunday worship services *every week* or *nearly every week*. For elders, nine in ten (90%) report attending this often.
- ✓ Among married members, 51% have spouses who attend *every week* or *nearly every week*. Among elders, 65% have spouses who attend that often.
- ✓ Outside of worship, half of members (49%) and eight in ten elders (83%) participated three or more hours in the prior month in programs or activities of their congregation (e.g., church school), including 10% and 22%, respectively, who participated in such activities *more than ten hours*. However, almost one-third of members (30%) and 4% of elders report *no* participation in activities other than worship in the prior month.

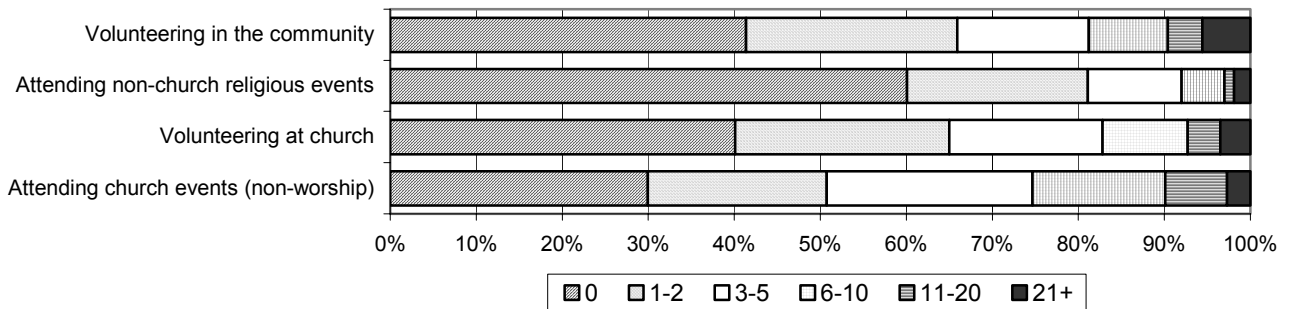


Figure 4
Hours Members Spent in Selected Religious and Volunteer Activities in the Prior Month

- ✓ Members and elders participate in church activities with greater frequency in small (less than 237 members) rather than large (1,030 or more members) congregations. For example, 70% of members in congregations with fewer than 237 attend *every week* or *nearly every week*, compared to 60% of members in congregations with a membership of 1,030 or more.
- ✓ For members, frequency of worship attendance is related to frequency of participation in other church activities. More than four in ten members who worship *every week* (43%) report that in the prior month they participated *six or more hours* in other activities at the church, while 14% of members who worship *2-3 times a month* report they participated at least six hours over the same period.
- ✓ In the month prior to the survey, four in ten members (40%) “participated in religious events, programs, or groups sponsored by a church or other religious organization [that] took place in a home or other facility away from” their congregation. About half of these participants (21% overall) spent only *1-2 hours* in such activities. Few (3% overall) spent *more than ten hours*.

Volunteering

- ✓ A majority of members (60%) and almost all elders (97%) report volunteering time in the month prior to the survey “to teach, lead, serve on a committee, or help with some program or event” in their congregation. Most members donated *1-2 hours* (25% of all members) or *3-4 hours* (18%), while 47% of all elders reported donating *six or more hours*.
- ✓ A similar percentage of members (59%) but fewer elders (59%) report volunteering time in the prior month outside their church to “help the less fortunate or to help make your own community a better place to live.” One in ten members (10%) and one in 12 elders (8%) report volunteering *more than ten hours* in their community.

Church Activities and Involvement

Church Leadership

- ✓ Among members, 13% have previously been ordained as *both* elders and deacons; 18% as elders (but not deacons); and 14% as deacons (but not elders). More than half (55%) have never been ordained to either office.
- ✓ More than four in ten elders (45%) and 5% of members currently chair a congregational committee.
- ✓ One in eight members (8%) and one in nine elders (11%) serve as officers of a congregational men’s, women’s, or youth group. Another 20% and 26%, respectively, are members of such groups.

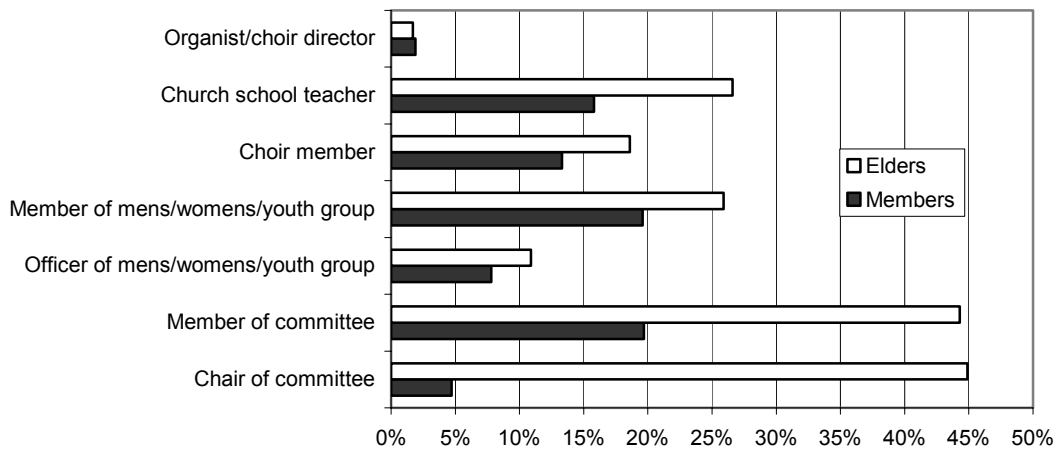


Figure 5
Leadership Activities in Congregations

Comparing Members and Elders

The fact that one-third of members (31%) have previously been ordained as elders suggests strongly that the profiles of Panel members and elders would have much in common, and they do. But they are not identical. While we would expect the much higher leadership rates found among elders, since that is a part of serving a term as elder, other differences may not be as obvious.

In general, as compared to members, elders: participate more in both worship and other congregational activities, spend more time in religious activities outside of church, and have more orthodox beliefs (e.g., more believe that “Jesus will return to earth one day,” and fewer believe that “all the world’s different religions are equally good ways of helping a person find ultimate truth”). The two profiles also differ significantly on a variety of social and demographic characteristics. Six in ten members (61%) are female, while elders are split evenly between male (50%) and female (50%). While the median age, 55, is the same for both groups, elders are more concentrated in the “typical” working ages of 25-64, and thus more of them are currently employed. Elders are also more likely than members to be married and to have had a child, and more of them have a graduate degree. There is little or no difference between members and elders in their political preference, race-ethnicity, or average household size.

Church Activities and Involvement

Financial Stewardship

- ✓ For 2001, panelists report their median giving to congregations for all causes as:

	Per Household		Per Person	
	Median	Mean	Median	Mean
Members:.....	\$1,642	\$3,214	\$ 755	\$1,473
Elders:.....	\$3,250	\$6,502	\$1,450	\$3,167
Pastors:	\$4,200	\$4,988	\$1,575	\$2,090
Specialized clergy:	\$3,010	\$4,578	\$1,200	\$1,917

- ✓ Of money given to congregations by members in 2001, 63% went to regular program and mission. The corresponding figure for elders is 70%. Most of the rest for both samples went to capital campaigns.
- ✓ Median church contributions per household are about 2% of median family income for members, 4% for elders, 7% for pastors, and 4% for specialized clergy.
- ✓ 40% of members, 48% of elders, 64% of pastors, and 67% of specialized clergy report giving money to non-Presbyterian religious causes in 2001. Most gave relatively small amounts (e.g., among members who gave at least \$1, the median amount given is \$200), but a few gave much larger amounts. Of panelists in each sample who gave at least \$1 to religious causes outside the PC(USA), 28% of members, 32% of elders and pastors, and 48% of specialized clergy gave more than \$500.
- ✓ More than eight in ten panelists in every sample gave money in 2001 to a non-religious charity. Median amounts given (among those who gave at least \$1) were members, \$400; elders, \$500; pastors, \$200; and specialized clergy, \$500.

Stewardship of Time and Stewardship of Money: Are They Related?

In a word, yes! Members who attend worship *every week* report a median household contribution of \$2,230 to their church in 2001, compared to \$2,000 for members who attend *nearly every week*, \$1,220 for members who attend *two to three times a month*, and \$990 for members who attend *once a month*. The pattern among elders is similar, with *weekly* attenders giving a median of \$3,650 in 2001, those attending *nearly every week* giving \$3,000, and those attending *two-to-three times a month* giving \$2,700. Only ten elders admitted to attending around *once a month*, and their median giving to the church for 2001 was \$1,500.

The same pattern holds when we look at other types of church involvement. The median amount given in 2001 by members who report *no* participation in church activities other than worship in the prior month is \$1,000, two-thirds the median amount—\$1,500—given by members who participated 1-2 hours in that same month. Interestingly, median giving plateaus above ten hours of participation, with members who participated 11-20 hours giving about as much, on average (median is \$2,700), as members who participated more than 20 hours (\$2,712). Elders show a uniform increase in average giving with increases in participation, rising from \$1,945 among those who did not participate in church activities in the prior month, to \$5,000 among those who participated 20 or more hours.

Piety and Belief

Prayer

- ✓ Panelists who report that they pray privately *daily/almost daily* range from 64% of members and 73% of elders to 88% of pastors and 82% of specialized clergy. An overlapping 22%, 26%, 45%, and 41%, respectively, pray with friends or family members *daily/almost daily*.
- ✓ Participation in prayer groups that meet *weekly* (or more often) is reported by 8% of members, 12% of elders, 44% of pastors, and 27% of specialized clergy.

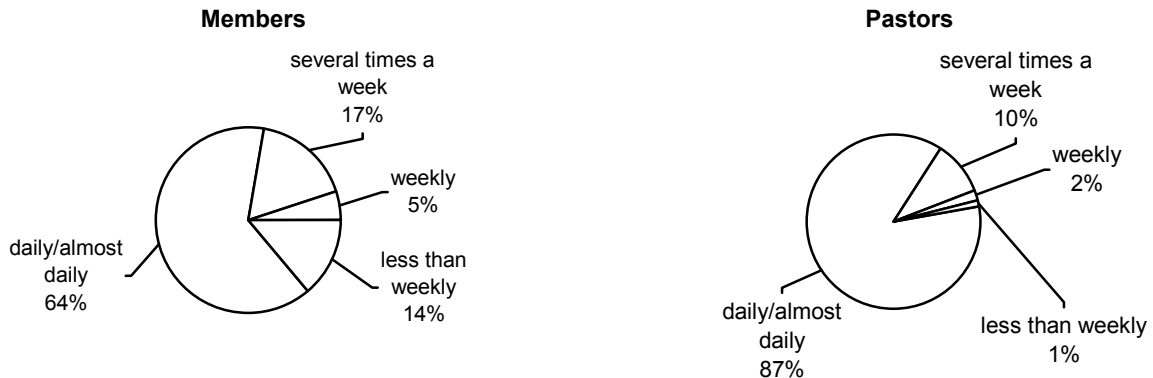


Figure 6
Frequency of Private Prayer

The Bible

- ✓ Four in ten members and a majority of elders (52%) read the Bible at least *weekly*. More than one-half of pastors (53%) and one-third of specialized clergy (37%) read the Bible *daily* or *almost daily*.

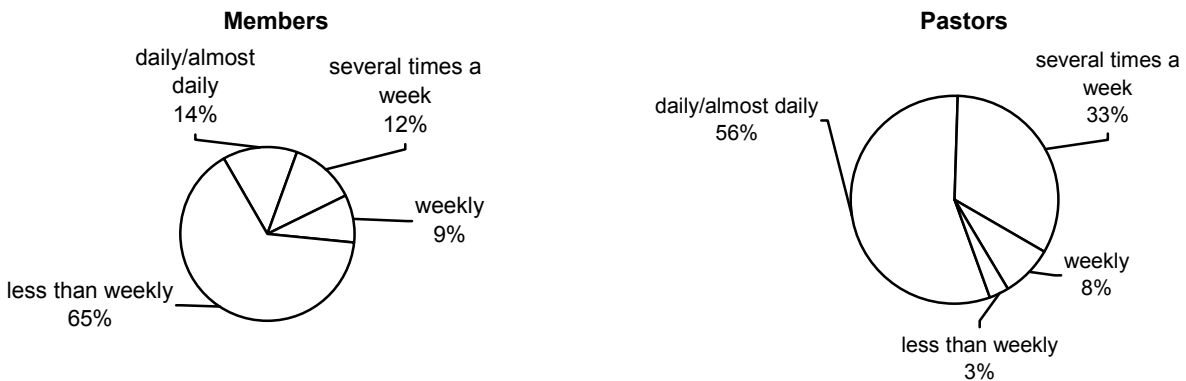


Figure 7
Frequency of Private Bible Reading

- ✓ One in five members (20%), one in three elders (31%) and specialized clergy (37%), and two-thirds of pastors (69%) “attend a Bible study group” that meets *weekly* (or more often).
- ✓ Majorities of members (54%), elders (64%), and pastors (59%), and 42% of specialized clergy, believe that “The account of Creation presented in Genesis is a true account of how God created the world,” but only 8%, 7%, 2%, and 1%, respectively, believe that that account “is literally true, exactly as we find it in the Bible.”

Piety and Belief

Table 1. Overall View of the Bible

THE BIBLE:	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
is the word of God, to be taken literally, word for word.....	15%	17%	4%	2%
is the word of God, to be interpreted in the light of its historical and cultural context.....	37%	45%	58%	51%
is the word of God, to be interpreted in the light of its historical context and the Church's teachings.....	37%	32%	32%	35%
is not the word of God, but contains God's word to us.....	8%	4%	6%	10%
is not the word of God but is a valuable book.....	2%	1%	*	1%
is an ancient book with little value today.....	*	—	—	—
don't know.....	2%	1%	*	*
* = less than 0.5% — = zero				

Particular Beliefs

- ✓ Majorities in every sample *agree* or *strongly agree* that:
 - “it is important to share my faith with other people” (members, 78%; pastors, 99%)
 - “the only absolute Truth for humankind is in Jesus Christ” (70% and 71%, respectively)
 - “Jesus was born of a virgin” (78%; 67%)
- ✓ Majorities of elders (63%), pastors (86%), and specialized clergy (71%), but only 46% of members, *disagree* or *strongly disagree* that “all the different religions are equally good ways of helping a person find ultimate truth.”
- ✓ Panelists are somewhat divided on the centrality of the Christian message for salvation, as Figure 8 shows.

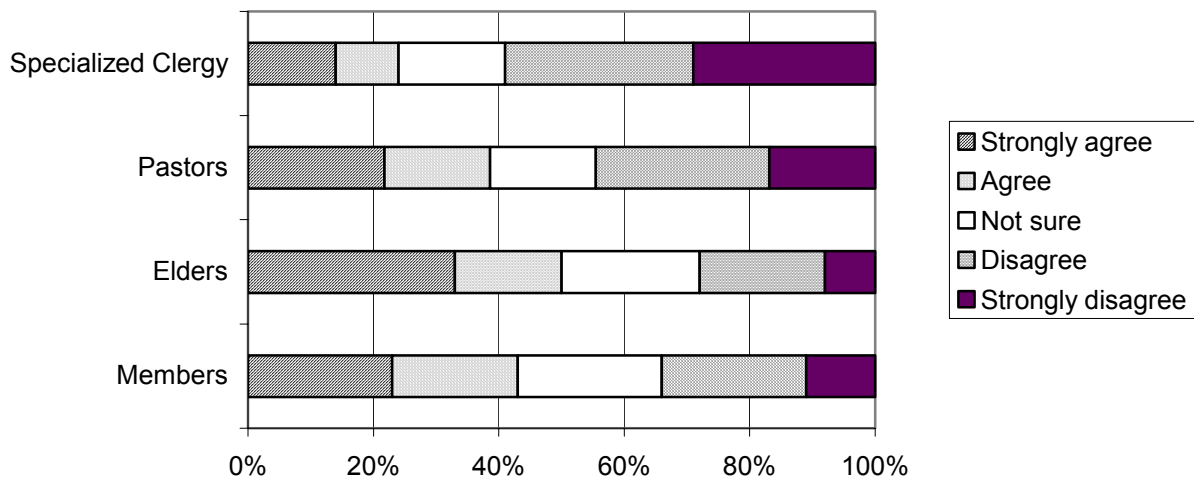


Figure 8
Opinions on “Only Followers of Jesus Christ can be Saved”

- ✓ Members and elders split in their responses to the statement, “We should respect other world religions and quit trying to impose Christianity on them.” Among elders, almost as many *strongly agree* (11%) or *agree* (27%) as *strongly disagree* (12%) or *disagree* (28%). Another 22% respond *not sure*. The responses of members tilt more toward *agree/strongly agree* (47%, compared to 28% who *strongly disagree* or *disagree*).

Piety and Belief

Faith as Lived

- ✓ 43% of members and 52% of elders report having had a *conversion experience*. (Ministers were not asked this question.)
- ✓ More than half of members (57%) and almost three-fourths of elders (73%) report having “tried to encourage someone to believe in Jesus Christ or accept Him as a personal savior” (not asked of ministers).
- ✓ Few pastors (6%) or specialized clergy (14%) but larger minorities of members (45%) and elders (32%) *agree* or *strongly agree* that “an individual should arrive at his or her own religious beliefs independent of any church.”

Liberals and Conservatives

- ✓ Large minorities in all samples (38% to 43%) describe their own theological views as *moderate*. Among members and elders, especially, and to a lesser extent among pastors, another large minority describes its theology as *conservative* or *very conservative*. Only among specialized clergy is the largest segment (47%) under the *liberal* or *very liberal* descriptor.

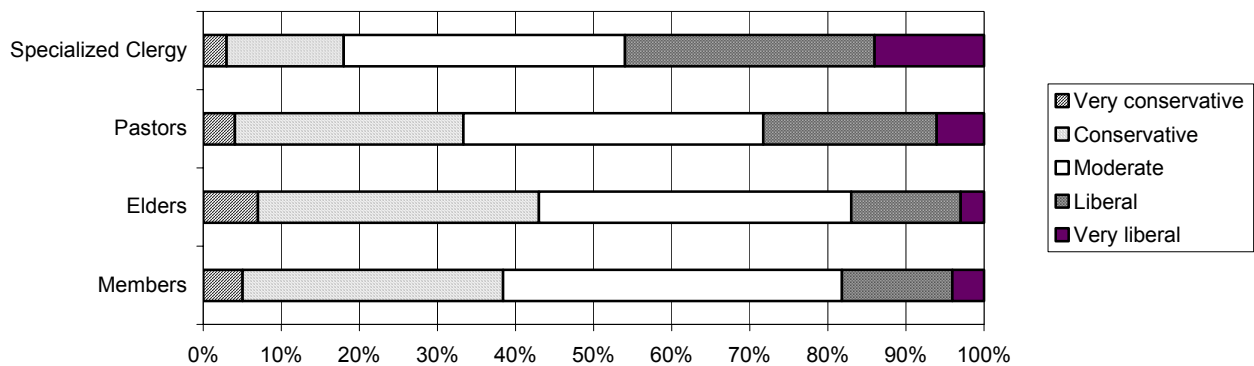


Figure 9
Theological Stance

- ✓ Self-chosen theological labels are related to a variety of other factors. Compared to *moderate* or *liberal/very liberal* members, more of the *very conservative* and *conservative* members: attend worship regularly, spend at least three hours a month attending other church events, read the Bible privately *daily/almost daily*, have ever encouraged someone to accept Jesus as personal savior, have had a conversion experience, or believe the Bible is literally true. Also, the conservative label is chosen by more male than female members and more older (60+ years) than younger (<40 years) members.

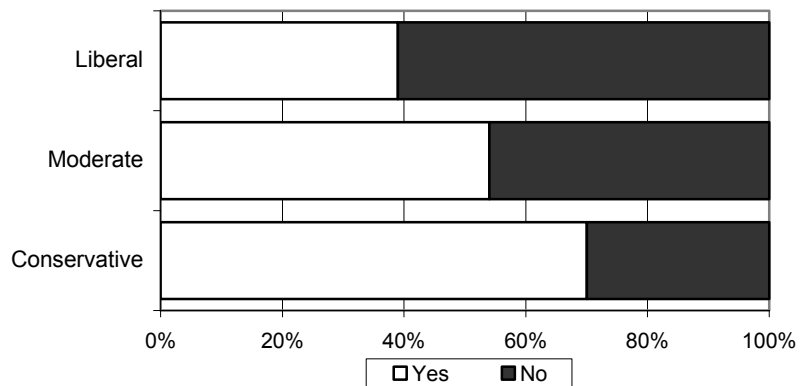


Figure 10
Percent of Members Who Have Ever Encouraged Someone to Accept Jesus as Savior by Self-reported Theological Views

Lay Liberals

Previous research has identified a sizable minority in Presbyterian and other Mainline Protestant denominations known as “lay liberals.” More concerned with right behavior than with right belief, these individuals are less certain of the uniqueness of the Christian message and more open to the truth claims of other faiths. The table below provides evidence on the size of this group in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), based on responses to this question: “Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement . . . All the different religions are equally good ways of helping a person find ultimate truth.” Few pastors *strongly agree* or *agree* with this statement, but progressively more specialized clergy, elders, and members do. Overall, around one in twelve pastors, one in five elders and specialized clergy, and one in three members hold lay-liberal beliefs on this issue. While there have been small fluctuations in response patterns on this question from survey to survey and sample to sample over the last decade, as the table shows, the broad pattern of response has remained relatively constant (with the possible exception of more specialized clergy responding as lay liberals over time).

Question: All the different religions are equally good ways of helping a person find ultimate truth.

Panel group:	Year of Survey				
	1990	1993	1996	1999	2002
	<i>percent who agree/strongly agree</i>				
Members	32%	35%	40%	35%	35%
Elders	23%	28%	24%	30%	22%
Pastors.....	6%	9%	7%	9%	8%
Specialized clergy.....	13%	9%	16%	16%	21%

Heaven and Hell

- ✓ Majorities of laity *strongly agree* or *agree* “there is a heaven” (members, 90%) and “there is a hell” (72%). (Not asked of ministers.)
- ✓ Majorities of members (64%), elders (73%), and pastors (62%), and half of specialized clergy (50%), *strongly agree* or *agree* that “the Devil (Satan) really exists.”
- ✓ Large majorities in every group (members, 86%; elders, 92%; pastors, 96%; specialized clergy, 91%) *strongly agree* or *agree* that “there is life beyond death.”
- ✓ Majorities ranging from two-thirds (members and specialized clergy, both 66%) to eight in ten (elders, 78%; pastors, 80%) *strongly agree* or *agree* that “Jesus will return to earth some day.”

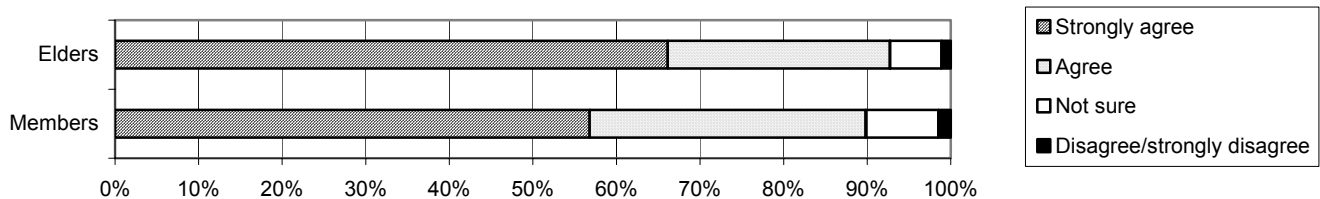


Figure 11
Responses to Statement “There Is a Heaven”

Calls and Careers

Current Call

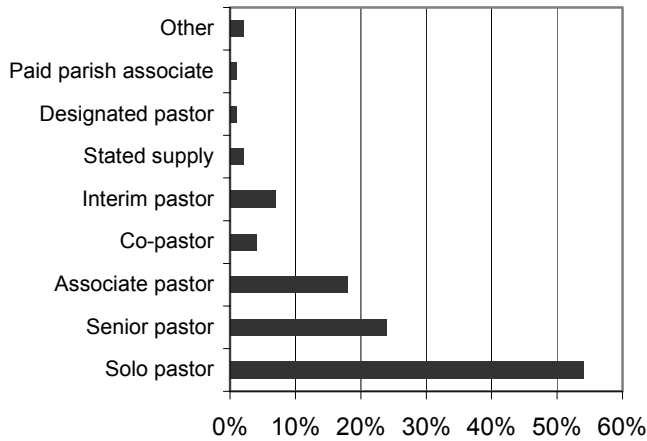


Figure 12
Pastors by Call

(Totals 113% because some have more than one.)

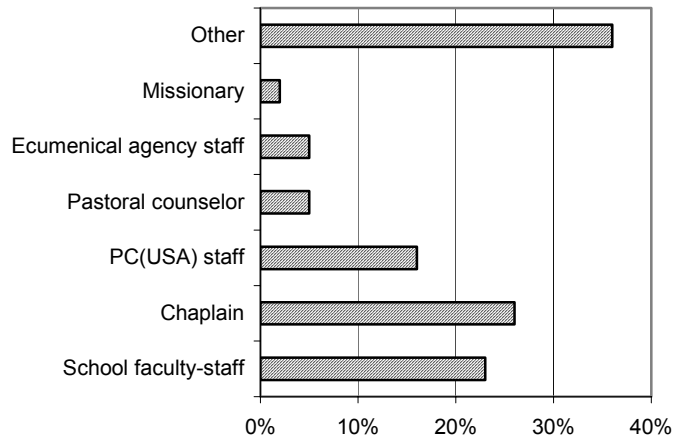


Figure 13
Specialized Clergy by Call

(Totals 113% because some have more than one.)

- ✓ 5% of pastors serve more than one congregation, two-thirds of them in a yoked parish.
- ✓ One in twelve pastors (8%) consider their current call as part time.
- ✓ One in five specialized clergy (20%) serve in parishes, most (64%) part time.

Discerning a Call

Pastors were a median of 21 years of age when they discerned a call to ministry. At that time, they attended congregations with a median size of 450 members. (This contrasts with the median size of all PC(USA) congregations of 117 in 2001.) Only about half of pastors (52%) were attending the church they grew up in at the time they discerned a call.

Majorities of pastors report that the congregation they attended when they discerned a call was either *very important* (43%) or *important* (37%) in their process of discernment. Among these individuals, the person or feature that “most influenced your sense of call” in the congregation ranged from the *pastor* (49%) to the *overall culture or “feel”* (14%) to a *congregational program/activity* (13%). Others listed a *lay leader* (8%) or *other staff person* (8%).

Education of Ministers

- ✓ More than four in ten pastors (46%) and specialized clergy (44%) received their bachelor’s degree from a church-related college or university, including 26% and 25%, respectively, who graduated from a Presbyterian-related school.
- ✓ Two-thirds of ministers (68%) received their B.D. or M.Div. degree from a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)-affiliated seminary, including 16% who graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary. Fuller Theological Seminary graduated 6% of all ministers, or around one-fifth of the graduates from non-PC(USA) schools.

Calls and Careers

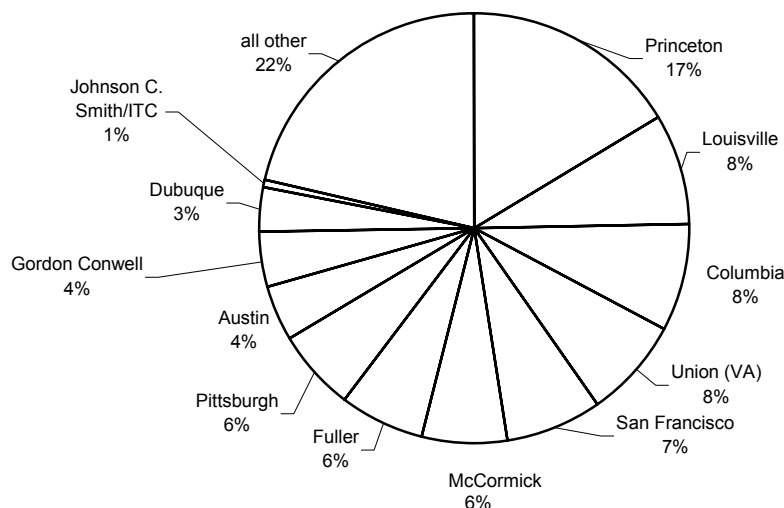


Figure 14
Where Ministers Earned B.D./M.Div. Degree

- ✓ Around four in ten ministers (38%) have one or more graduate degrees in theology or Christian education in addition to the B.D./M.Div. More than a quarter of all ministers (28%) have a doctoral degree. Typically that degree is the D.Min., earned by 24% of pastors and 16% of specialized clergy. Two-thirds of ministers with the D.Min. degree (67%) received it from a PC(USA)-affiliated school.
- ✓ 9% of ministers are currently enrolled in a graduate school, seminary, or theological school. More than nine in ten of these students (93%) are pursuing a doctoral degree, typically the D.Min.

Career Background

- ✓ 95% of ministers of the Word and Sacrament were ordained for that office in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or one of its predecessor denominations. Of the rest, around three in ten, or a little more than 1% of all ministers, were ordained in a Baptist church.
- ✓ A third of ministers (31%) were ordained in 1990 or later. Another third (31%) were ordained during the 1980s. Only 1% were ordained prior to 1960. (Note that retired ministers are excluded from the Panel.)
- ✓ More than one-third of all clergy (36%) see themselves as *second-career ministers*. They served a median of eight years in their prior career.

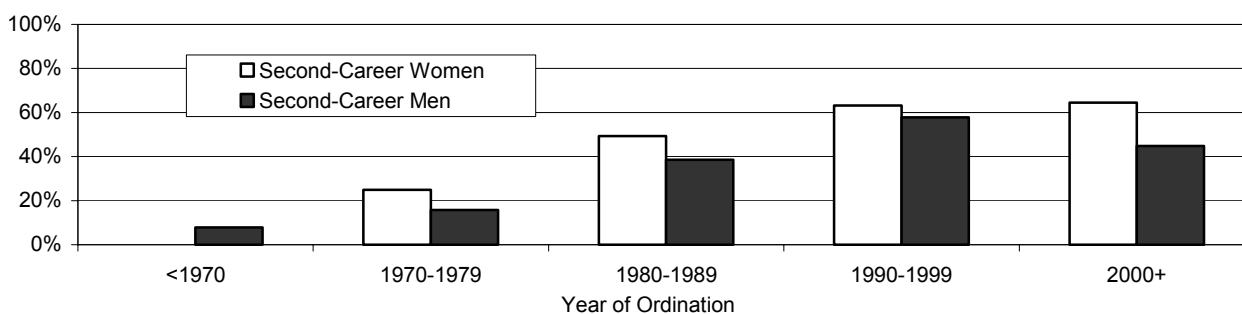


Figure 15
Percent of Pastors Who Are in Second Careers, by Gender and Year of Ordination

Comparing Men and Women in Ministry

Prior to 1970, few women were ordained to the ministry in either the PCUS or the UPCUSA. The result? Most women who are ministers were ordained to that office relatively recently. In fact, 57% of female pastors and 49% of female specialized clergy were ordained between 1990 and 2002. By contrast, 29% of male pastors and 12% of male specialized clergy were ordained in the 1990-2002 period.

As the figure on p. 11 shows, pastors in the PC(USA) are increasingly trained and called *after* employment in another field or service. This pattern is especially descriptive of women (many of whom, of course, faced obstacles to the ministry when they were at the age of entering into a first career). Among pastors, a majority of women (56%) describe themselves as *second-career*, compared to 33% of men. The trend toward more second-career ministers may have peaked in the 1990s. While still a majority, the percentage of those ordained between 2000 and 2002 who are second-career is 51%, lower than the 57% recorded for the 1990s.

Male and female pastors differ, on average, in their beliefs, too. While 48% of female pastors label themselves theologically as *very liberal* or *liberal*, only 23% of male pastors do so. Similarly, only 15% of female pastors see themselves theologically as *very conservative* or *conservative*, compared to 38% of male pastors.

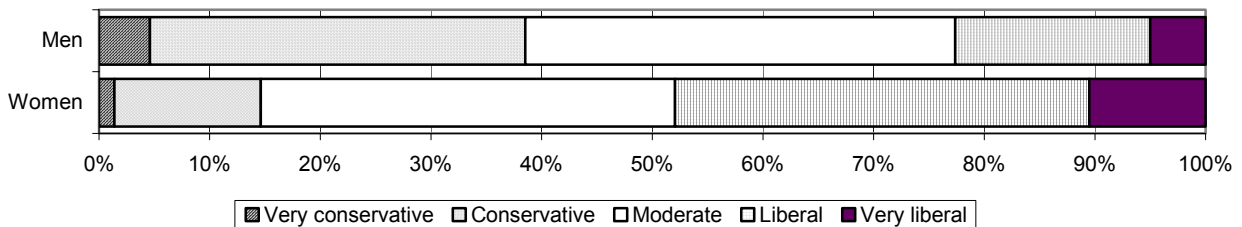


Figure 16
Theological Stance by Gender among Pastors

Employment Status and Income

- ✓ 52% of members and 58% of elders are currently employed, most full time. Around one-third of members (35%) and elders (30%) are retired, and another one in ten (members, 11%; elders, 8%) classify themselves as full-time homemakers.
- ✓ Members employed full-time work a median of 44 hours per week; elders, 45 hours. Members employed part-time work a median of 20 hours per week; elders, 22 hours.
- ✓ Among married members, 40% have employed spouses; among married elders, 45%; among married pastors and among married specialized clergy, 76%.
- ✓ Median family income in Panel samples is (approximately): members, \$72,000; elders, \$72,600; pastors, \$65,200; and specialized clergy, \$75,800.
- ✓ Three in ten members (30%), four in ten elders (38%), a quarter of specialized clergy (24%), and 15% of pastors report total household income for 2001 of \$100,000 or more. That compares to 6%, 3%, 2%, and 3%, respectively, who report total household income for 2001 of less than \$20,000.

Social and Demographic Characteristics

Sex, Age, and Race-Ethnicity

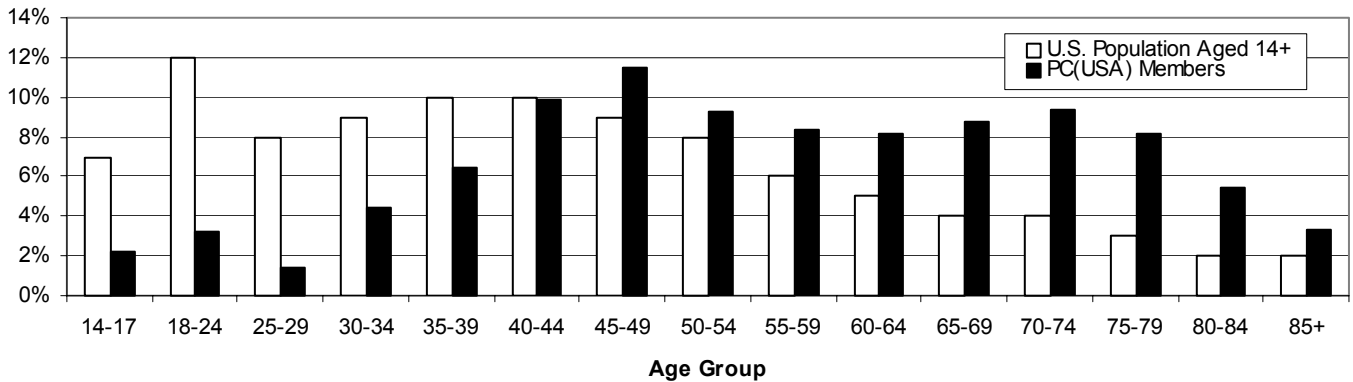


Figure 17
Age Comparison of Presbyterian Members and U. S. Population

- ✓ Women are a majority of members (61%), around half of elders (50%), a quarter of pastors (23%), and a third of specialized clergy (34%).
- ✓ The median age for members and elders is 55 years; for pastors, 51 years; and for specialized clergy, 54 years.
- ✓ Almost all panelists list their race-ethnicity as *white*, including 97% of members, 96% of elders, 93% of pastors, and 91% of specialized clergy. Other groups comprising 2% or more of any Panel group (note that respondents could indicate more than one racial or ethnic category) include:
 - *African Americans*: 2% of elders, pastors, and specialized clergy
 - *Asian and Pacific Islanders*: 3% of pastors, and 4% of specialized clergy
 - *Hispanic, Latino, Spanish origin*: 2% of specialized clergy
 - *Native American*: 2% of specialized clergy

How are Presbyterians Changing, Demographically Speaking?

The percentage of members who are female has remained around 60% since 1973. But women have become an increasing share of other groups. In 1973, three in ten elders were women, rising to four in ten in 1984 and plateauing around 50% in the late 1980s. In 1973 only 1% of all pastors were women, a share that steadily increased to 8% in 1984, 13% in 1990, and the current 23%.

The median age of members has not changed significantly in more than 15 years: it was 54 years in 1987 and is 55 years today. It was 49 years in 1973. Among elders, the median age has shown a similar progression, rising from 49 years in 1973 to 55 in both 1990 and 2002. Among pastors, median age has gradually risen, from 46 years in 1973 to 51 years at present.

The racial-ethnic makeup has changed little in the last two decades.

Note: Prior to 1984, the Panel surveyed only within the UPCUSA.

Social and Demographic Characteristics

Marriage and Childbearing

- ✓ Large majorities of members (77%), elders (84%), pastors (87%), and specialized clergy (83%) are currently married. In all, 9% of members, 5% of elders, and 6% of pastors and specialized clergy have *never* married.
- ✓ Among the *ever-married* (that is, those either currently or previously married), 19% of members and of elders, 20% of pastors, and 23% of specialized clergy have been divorced one or more times.
- ✓ Female members in their late 20s to early 40s have similar numbers of children, on average, as compared to Americans in general, but at younger ages female members have fewer average children.

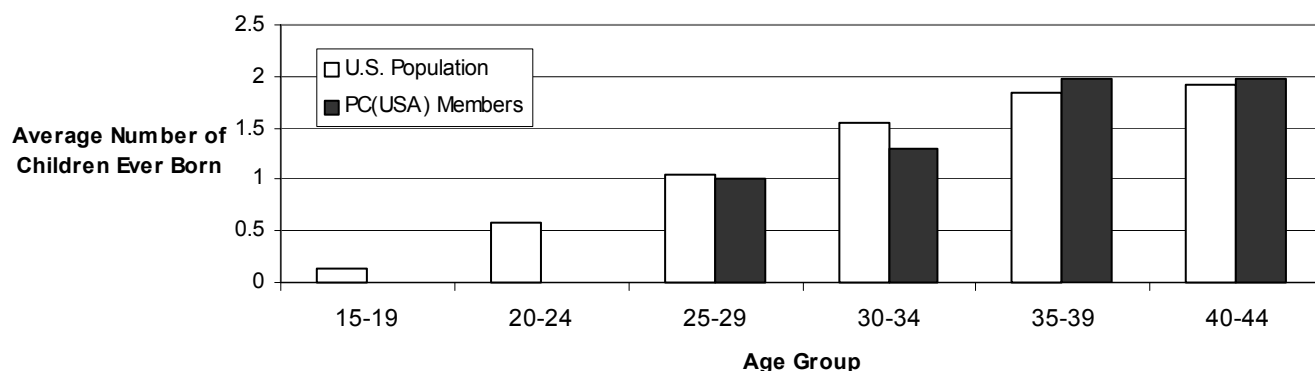


Figure 18
Average Number of Children for Women in the U.S. Population and in the Panel

Education of Laity

- ✓ A large majority of members (62%) and elders (73%) have a college degree. Many of these (members, 25%; elders, 32%) have one or more graduate degrees.
- ✓ Formal education levels among spouses are similar to those of the panelists themselves. Among married panelists, the percentage of spouses with a college degree (or more formal schooling) is 65% among members, 69% among elders, 88% among pastors, and 86% among specialized clergy.

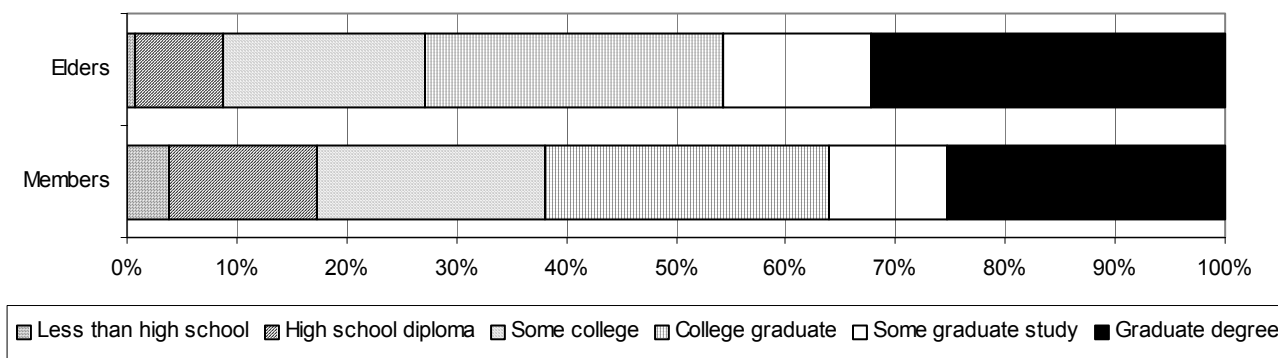


Figure 19
Formal Education of Members and Elders

Social and Demographic Characteristics

Worshiping as Couples

The vast majority of married Presbyterians has a spouse who is also Presbyterian, including 87% of members, 90% of elders, 95% of pastors, and 84% of specialized clergy. Spouses of laity almost always attend worship at the same congregations as panelists, at least occasionally, and most do so regularly: 68% of married members and 82% of married elders have spouses who attend Sunday worship with them *every week, nearly every week, or 2-3 times a month* (not asked of ministers).

The denomination with the largest share of non-Presbyterian spouses is the Catholic Church, home to spouses of 3% of members and elders, 1% of pastors, and 2% of specialized clergy. Another 2% of specialized clergy spouses are Episcopal, and another 2%, United Church of Christ. In addition, 5% of married members, 4% of married elders, and 1% of married pastors and specialized clergy have a spouse with no faith preference.

Living Arrangements and Household Characteristics

- ✓ One in seven members (13%), one in eight elders (12%), one in ten pastors (10%), and one in nine specialized clergy (11%) *live alone*.

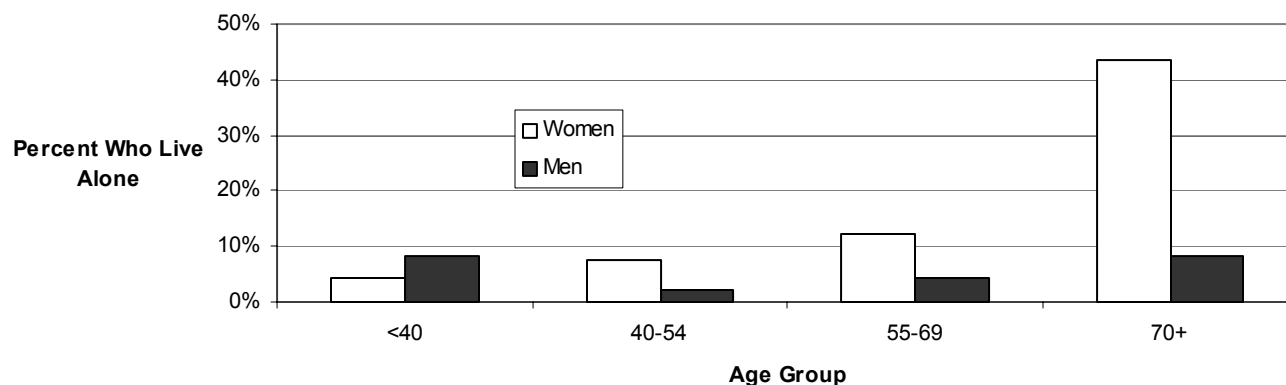


Figure 20
Living Alone by Age and Gender: Members

- ✓ Few Presbyterians live in large households: only around one-fourth of members (25%), elders (24%), and specialized clergy (24%), and three-in-ten pastors (30%), have as many as four persons (including themselves) in their households. The mean household size is 2.6 persons for members, elders, and specialized clergy, and 2.8 for pastors.
- ✓ Around eight in ten member (79%) and elder (82%) households contain a married couple, many with children. Overall, more than a third of both member (36%) and elder (35%) households consist of a married couple with one or more children. Among pastors, 85% live in a married-couple household, including the 46% of pastor household containing a married couple with one or more children. Among specialized clergy, 80% of all households contain a married couple, including the 39% that have a married couple with one or more children.
- ✓ Few single-parent households are found among Presbyterians. Only 4% of members, 3% of elders, 2% of pastors, and 3% of specialized clergy live in households that consist of a (currently) unmarried parent with his or her dependent child(ren).

Social and Demographic Characteristics

Why Do Presbyterian Families Look So Different Demographically from the U.S. Population?

Nowhere is the selective make up of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) more apparent than when we look at family and household composition. Compared to the U.S. population, Presbyterian members are *much more likely* to be married, to live in married-couple households, and to have no children under the age of 18 living at home, and *much less likely* to have ever been divorced. The reason? While many factors play a part, the greatest by far is the drift of young adults away from the church over the last several decades. While some have returned, many have not. As a result, the membership of the church is not only older, on average, than the U.S. population, but many trends in the larger society that have become more common among younger adults over the last generation (e.g., increasing divorce, men and women living together outside of marriage) have disproportionately bypassed the church.

Region and Residence

- ✓ Presbyterian members are distributed across the country in similar fashion to the overall U.S. population, with a small underrepresentation in the West, and a small overrepresentation in the Midwest.

Table 2. Geographical Distribution

Census Region	PCUSA Members	U.S. Population 2001
Northeast	20%	19%
Midwest.....	28%	22%
South	36%	36%
West	16%	23%
Total	100%	100%

- ✓ More than four in ten members (41%) and elders (43%) live in either rural areas, small towns, or cities with less than 50,000 population, a much greater proportion than the 20% of the U.S. population that live in non-metropolitan areas.

Political Preference

- ✓ Majorities of members (57%) and elders (55%), but only 30% of pastors and 17% of specialized clergy, describe their political preference as *Republican*. The label *Democrat* is chosen by 25%, 27%, 48%, and 64%, respectively. Around one in six in each sample chooses the label *Independent*.

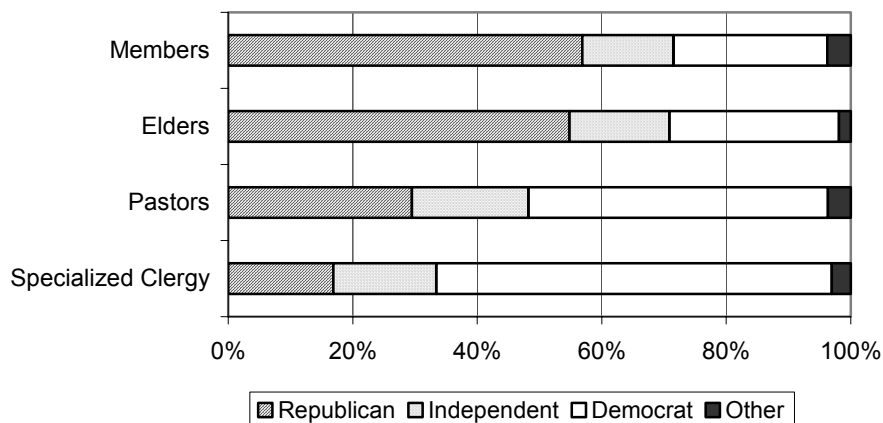


Figure 21
Panelists' Political Preferences

Internet Use

- ✓ Half of members (49%) and a majority of elders (56%) access the Internet *daily or more often*. Only 20% and 12%, respectively, *never* access the Internet. (Not asked of ministers.)

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