

***APPROVED: March 9, 2023***

**Minutes of the  
Commission to Unify the Office of the General Assembly  
and the Presbyterian Mission Agency  
February 18, 2023**

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Gathering      | The Commission to Unify the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency held an online meeting using Zoom, an online audio and web conferencing platform. The public, including press, was able to watch in real-time (and view a recording) via Vimeo, a video sharing platform, on the website of the Office of the General Assembly, in the General Assembly section ( <a href="https://oga.pcusa.org/ga">oga.pcusa.org/ga</a> ; accessed February 21, 2023).  |
| Opening Prayer | Cristi Scott Ligon, co-moderator of the Commission to Unify the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency (“Unification Commission”), called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. EST, and recognized Bill Teng for the opening prayer.  |
| Roll           | <p>The roll was formed:</p> <p>Commissioners (as appointed by the Co-Moderators of the 225th General Assembly (2022); criteria and demographics included for the record):</p> <p>Felipe N. Martínez, Co-Moderator, Teaching Elder, Presbytery of Ohio Valley; Commissioner, 225th General Assembly (2022)</p> <p>Cristi Scott Ligon, Co-Moderator, Ruling Elder, Presbytery of Middle Tennessee; Commissioner, 225th General Assembly (2022)</p> <p>Debra Avery, Teaching Elder, Presbytery of Great Rivers; Moving Forward Implementation Special Committee</p> <p>Carson Brown, Ruling Elder, Presbytery of Peace River; Young Adult Advisory Delegate, 225th General Assembly (2022)</p> <p>Dee Cooper, Teaching Elder, Presbytery of Denver; Presbyterian Mission Agency Board</p> <p>Frances Lin, Ruling Elder, Presbytery of San Diego; At-Large</p> <p>Scott Lumsden, Teaching Elder, Presbytery of Seattle; Per Capita and Financial Sustainability Special Committee</p> <p>Emily Martin, Ruling Elder, Presbytery of North Central California; Young Adult Advisory Delegate, 225th General Assembly (2022)</p> <p>José Rosa-Rivera, Ruling Elder, Presbiterio de San Juan; Per Capita and Financial Sustainability Special Committee</p> <p>Bill Teng, Teaching Elder, Presbytery of Peace River; Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation Board</p> <p>Ex-Officio:</p> <p>Shavon Starling-Louis, Co Moderator, 225th General Assembly (2022)</p> <p>Staff and Support:</p> <p>Raymond Bonwell, recorder</p> <p>Barry Creech, Deputy Executive Director for Administration, Presbyterian Mission Agency</p> <p>Kathy Lueckert, President, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation</p> <p>Kerry Rice, Deputy Stated Clerk, Office of the General Assembly</p> |

Alejandra Sherman, Executive Assistant to the President, Presbyterian Church  
(U.S.A.), A Corporation

**Invited Guests:**

Susan Barnett, PhD, MSSW, Director, Research Services, Presbyterian Church  
(U.S.A.)

**Excused:**

David Davis, Commissioner, Teaching Elder, Presbytery of the Coastlands;  
Committee on the Office of the General Assembly  
Kris Thompson, Ruling Elder, Presbytery of National Capital; At-Large  
Ruth Faith Santana-Grace, Ex-Officio, Co-Moderator, 225th General Assembly  
(2022)

**Land  
Acknowledgment**

Francis Lin led the land acknowledgment, informed by the location of the Presbytery of San Diego, and acknowledged the earlier inhabitants of the Kumeyaay Nation, whose focus on ecological diversity continues to the present.

**Agenda**

Without objection, the agenda was adopted. The agenda and presentations were distributed to the Unification Commission and publicly posted prior to the meeting.

**Minutes**

Upon motion and second, and without objection, the Minutes of the January 21, 2023, meeting were approved.

**Covenant**

Felipe N. Martínez and Cristi Scott Ligon, in their roles as co-moderators, read the covenant as a reminder of what the Unification Commission had adopted.

**Co-Moderator  
Report**

Felipe N. Martínez and Cristi Scott Ligon, provided the Unification Commission with an update of their work as co-moderators. The Unification Commission received a copy of the email of thanksgiving and prayerful support that was distributed to the employees of the Office of the General Assembly (“OGA”) (and the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly) and the Presbyterian Mission Agency (“PMA”) (and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board).

The co-moderators held a discussion regarding PC(USA) A Corporation, the corporate expression of OGA and PMA. The other four national agencies are each independently incorporated.

The co-moderators shared they traveled to Louisville, Ky. and met with J. Herbert Nelson II, stated clerk, OGA, Diane Givens-Moffett, executive director, PMA, and support staff.

**Overview of  
Presentations**

Felipe Martínez and Cristi Scott Ligon requested three background presentations to be developed and presented by subject matter experts. These background presentations were meant to provide historical and societal context for the changing nature of American Christianity. These three presentations – distributed prior to the meeting – focused on the following:

- trends in general in American religion, and in particular Mainline Protestantism;
- an overview of changes in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and,
- an overview of the organizational and structural changes in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Trends in  
American Religion  
and Protestantism

Susan Barnett, director, Research Services, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was introduced as a guest for the first presentation ([Attachment 1](#)). A highlight of the presentation was the decline of the percent of the American population expressing a religious affiliation declining since 1983, with a parallel decline in the PC(USA) membership.

There was a discussion around when New Worshipping Communities (“NWCs”) were included in data; when data references “membership and adherents” then NWCs are included in the datasets.

It was noted all the presentations were also loaded into EQUIP (the training and support site administered by OGA, accessible at [equip.pcusa.org](http://equip.pcusa.org)).

Trends in the  
PC(USA)

Felipe Martínez, after thanking Susan Barnett, welcomed Kerry Rice, deputy stated clerk, OGA, and staff to this Commission, for an overview of trends in the PC(USA) ([Attachment 2](#)). A highlight of the presentation was the denominational evolution of the PC(USA) as having 2/3 of all congregations with less than 100 members, while most membership is in the larger churches of more than 150 members.

The discussion returned to NWCs, which are reported by each presbytery, which may or may not include immigrant faith communities.

Structural Changes  
in the PC(USA)

Felipe Martínez, after thanking Kerry Rice, welcomed Barry Creech, deputy executive director for administration, PMA, and staff to this Commission, for an overview of structural changes in the PC(USA) ([Attachment 3](#)). A highlight were the recurring themes of trust and conflict, and the shifting emphasis over time on centralization and decentralization.

There were several questions focusing on the changing focus of “ministry units” to “program areas” and the organizational grouping became fewer in number and larger in scope over time. Barry Creech shared the draft presentation was much more detailed in scope and length, and would post this draft presentation to EQUIP to go beyond the intended higher-level focus of the final presentation.

Felipe Martínez thanked Barry Creech, and involved in the development of the presentations. It was noted that even intentionally engaged lifelong Presbyterians were able to learn something new from the presentations.

Preparing for the  
Next Meeting (In-  
Person with  
Remote  
Participation)

Felipe Martínez and Cristi Scott Ligon verbally shared their current draft overview for the schedule for the next meeting, March 9-11, 2023, designed to be in Louisville, Ky. at the Presbyterian Center, with the option for remote participation. The agenda would include the opportunity for scheduled presentations by senior staff and members of other commission of the General Assembly (including the Funding Model Development Team). The schedule would also reserve time for informal conversations from staff and between members of the Commission.

The subsequent discussion included requests for more detailed information, including financial statements. This information would be posted to EQUIP prior to the meeting. Commissioners were reminded if there are EQUIP access issues to contact Alejandra Sharman. During this conversation, Shavon Starling-Louis arrived and brought greetings.

Executive Session

Felipe Martínez observed the Unification Commission is following a better practice of including an executive session toward the end of the agenda, to include an appropriate time to discuss matters of personnel. There was a motion and second made to enter executive session. It was discussed the intent is not to take any action within executive

session, and the Commission intended to immediately rise from Executive Session, declare there were no actions, and adjourn with prayer. It was noted that any actions would be posted within the hour to the Commission website. The Commission entered executive session. In addition to the Commissioners, the following were invited by Felipe Martínez to remain: those serving ex-officio, and staff and support.

[Recorder's Note: the public livestream noted the Commission was meeting in executive session and the display was paused.]

Rising from  
Executive Session

Upon rising from Executive Session, it was reported no action was taken.

Staff reported the full video of today's meeting would be posted within one hour.

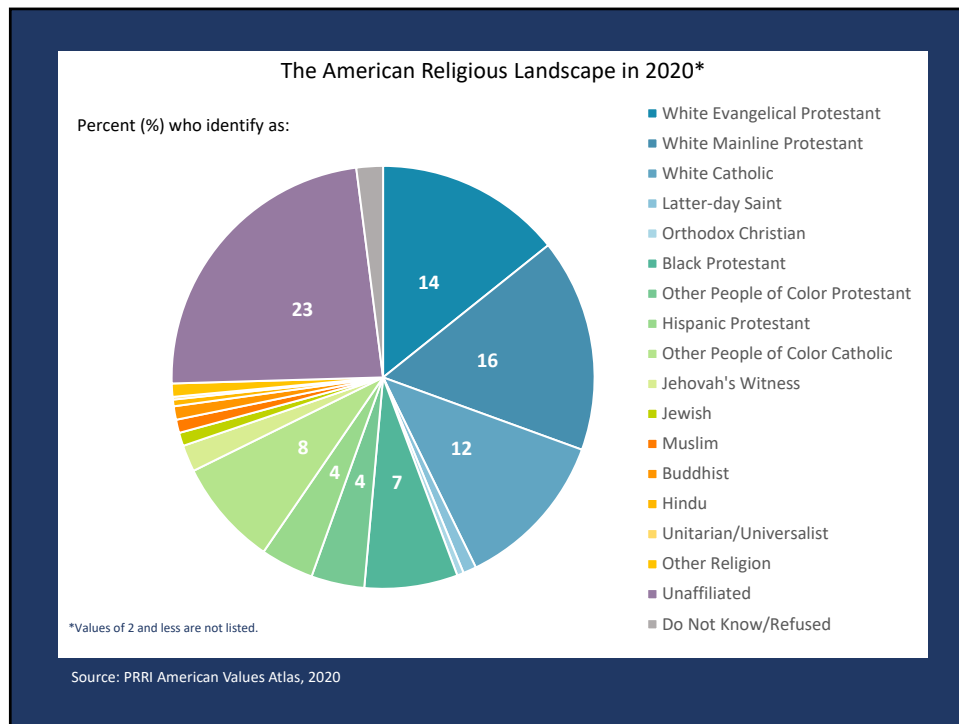
(Recorder's Note: posted to <https://vimeo.com/791491597>.)

Closing Prayer

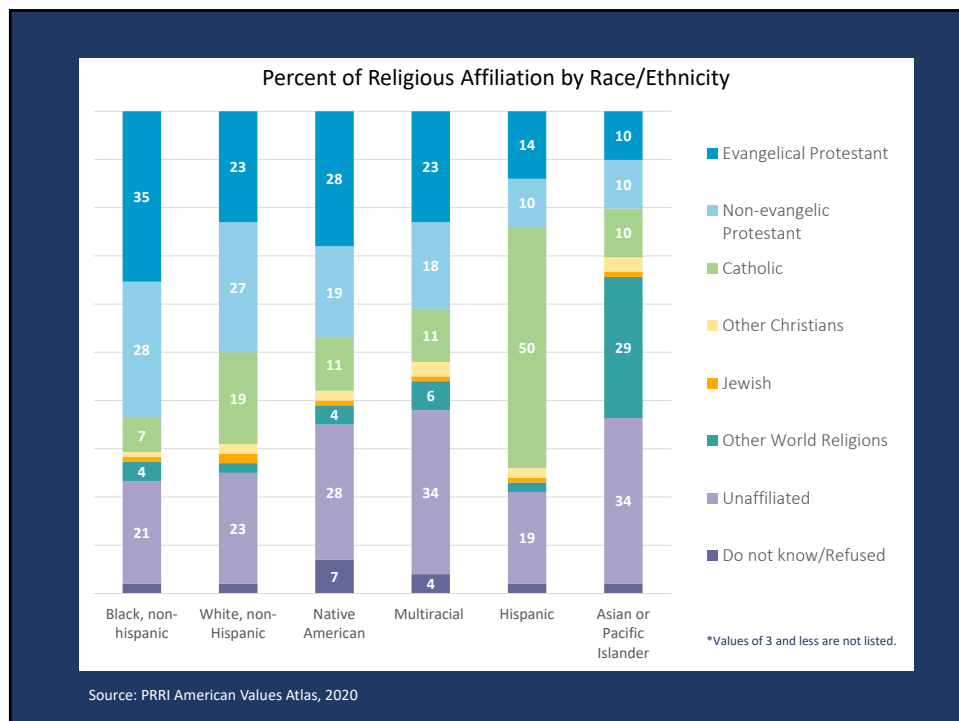
Felipe Martínez entertained a motion to adjourn. After a motion and second and without objection, with a closing prayer the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

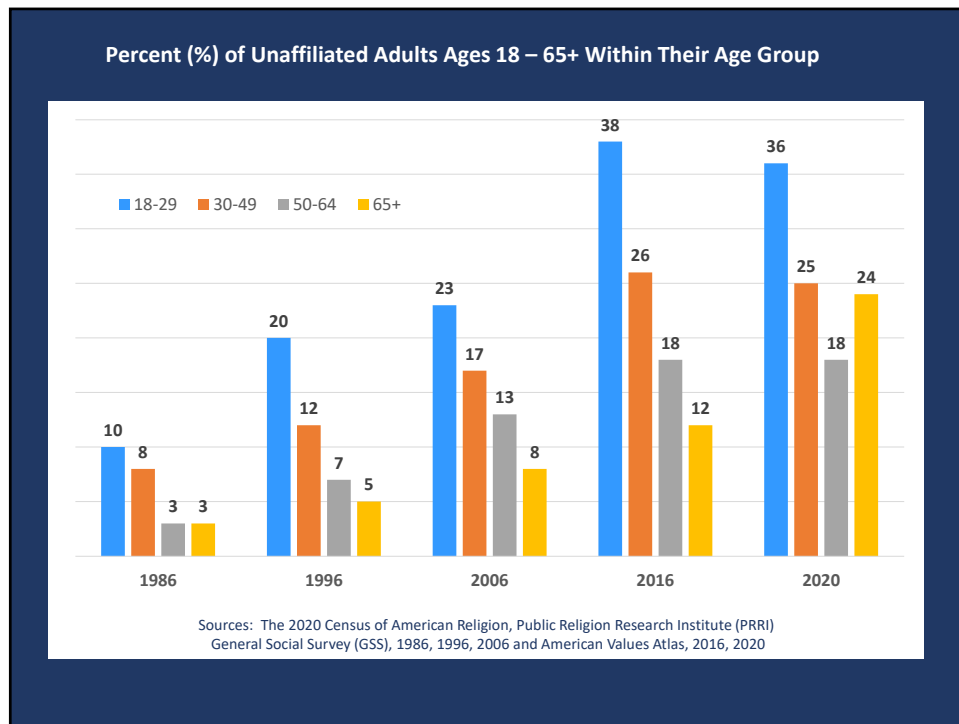
/s/ Raymond Bonwell  
Recorder



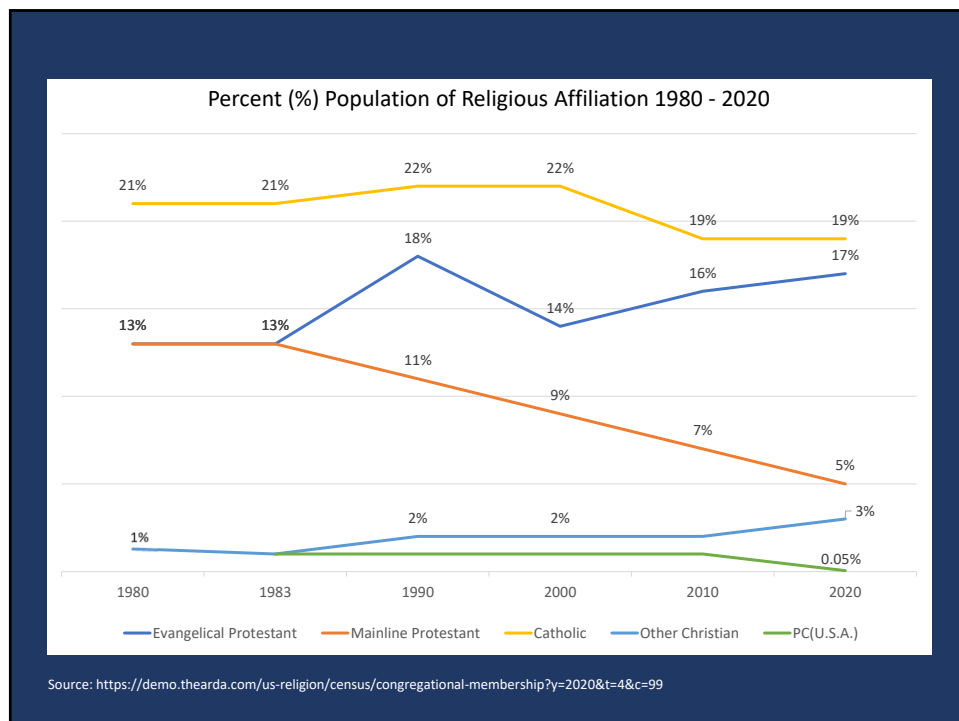
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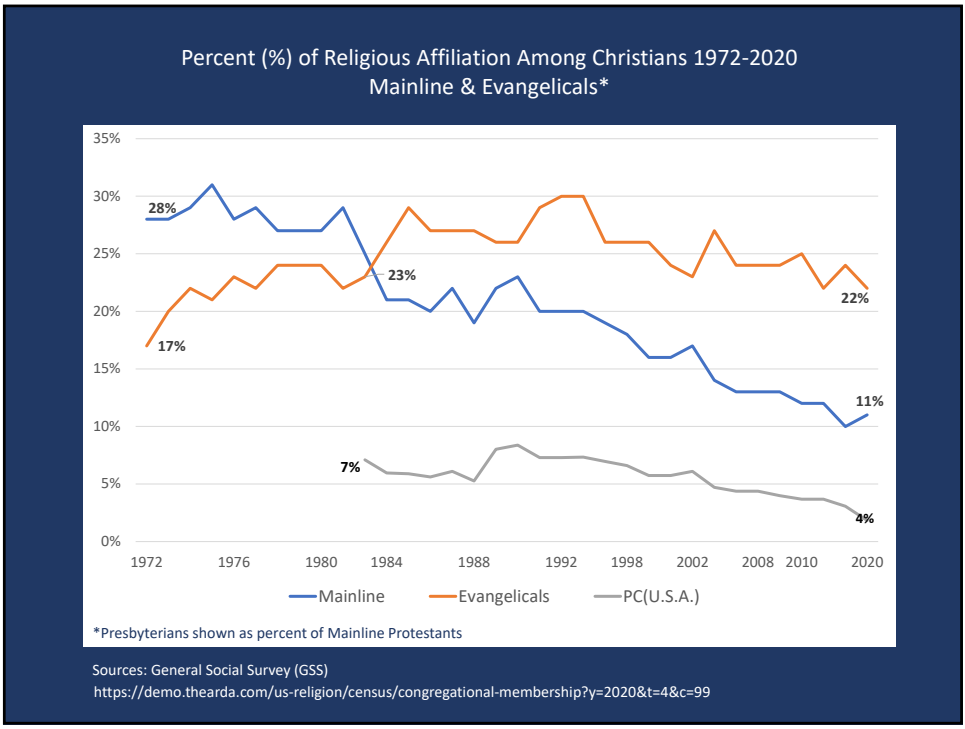
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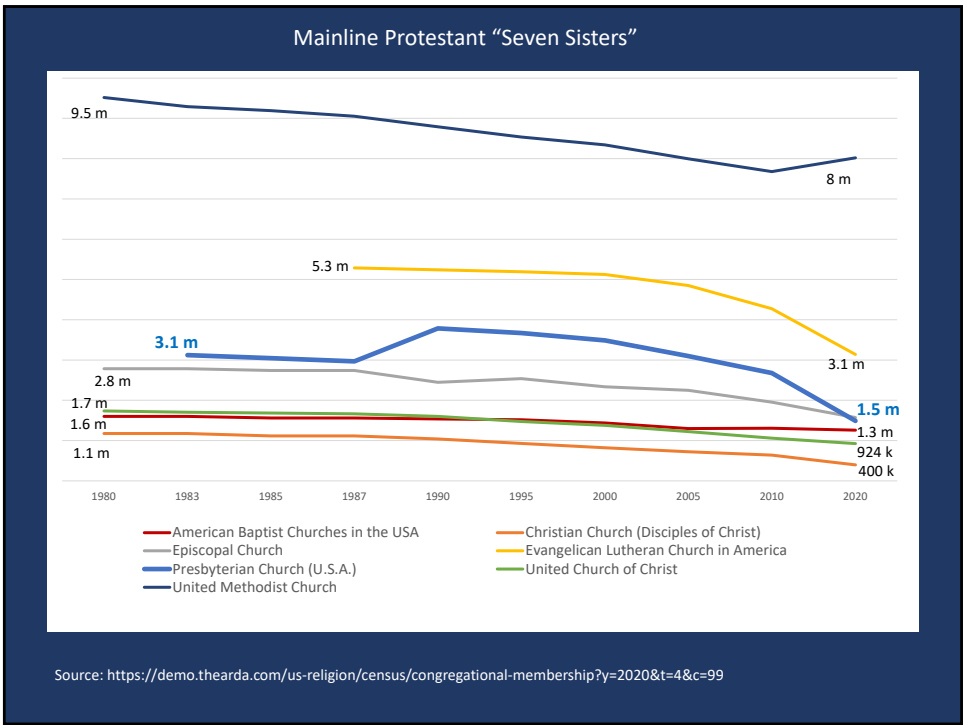
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# THE PC(USA): A STATISTICAL OVERVIEW



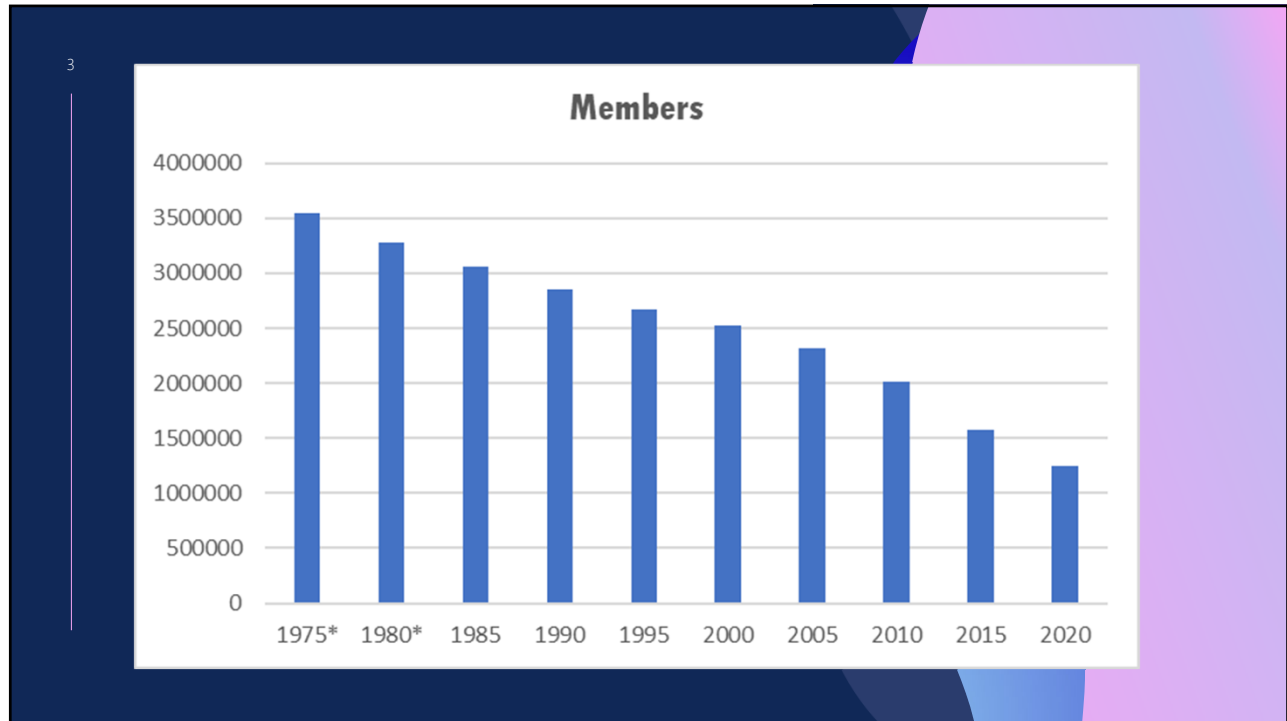
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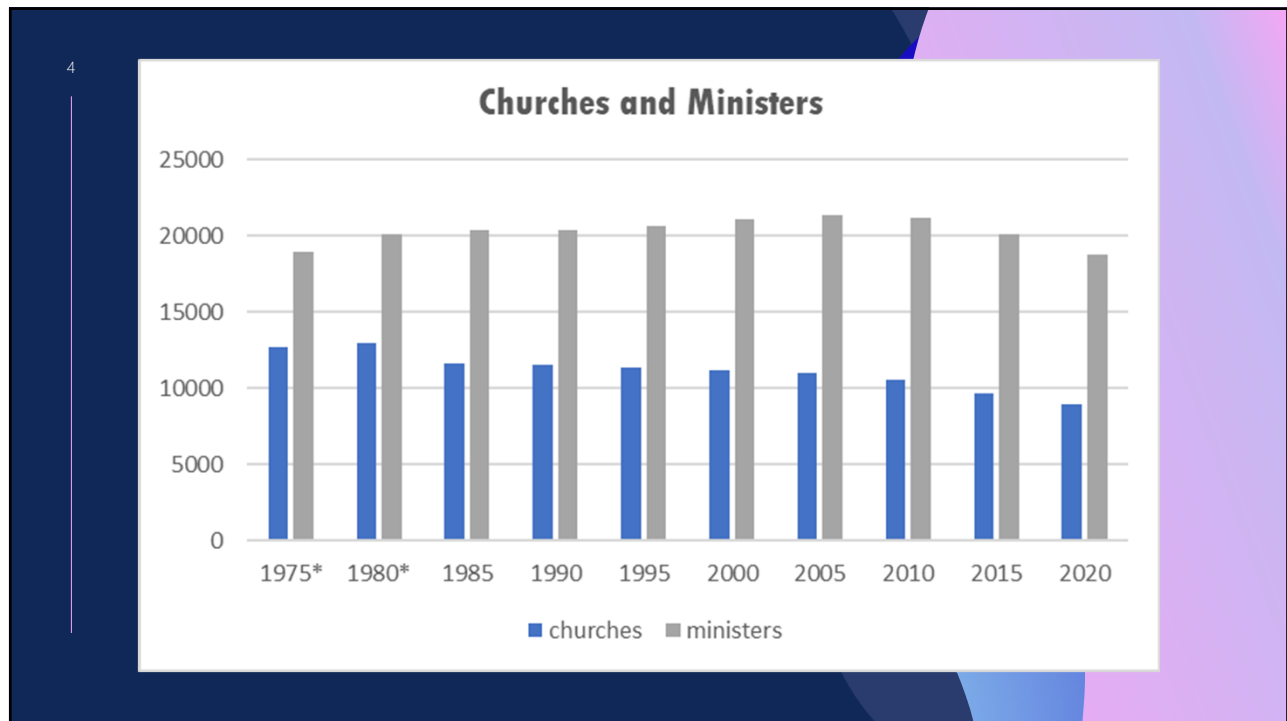
- Membership
- Churches and Ministers
- Church Size
- Per Capita and Mission Budgets
- Personnel for OGA and PMA

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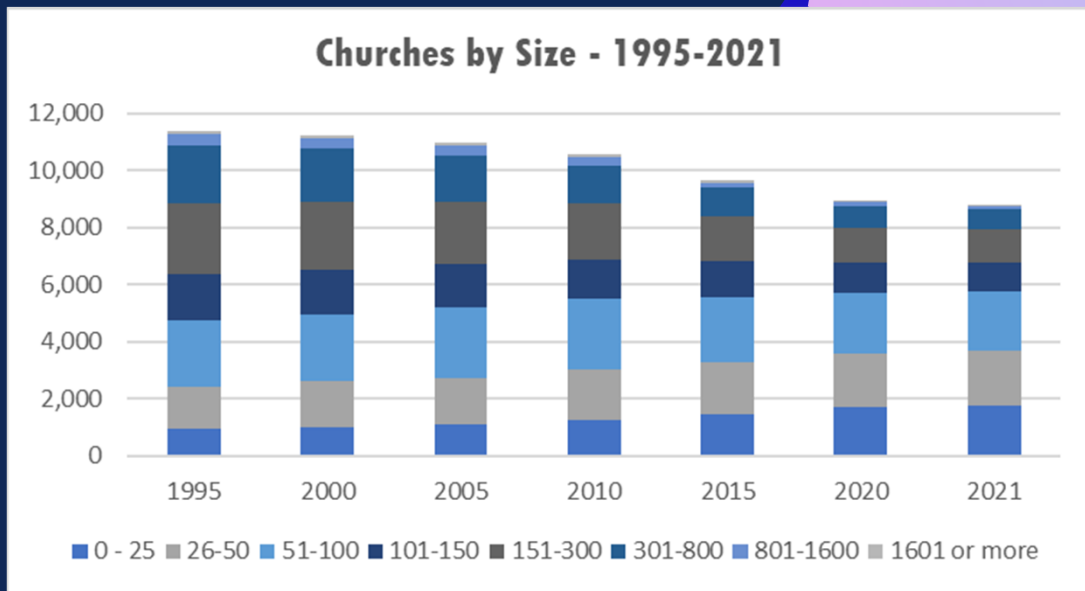


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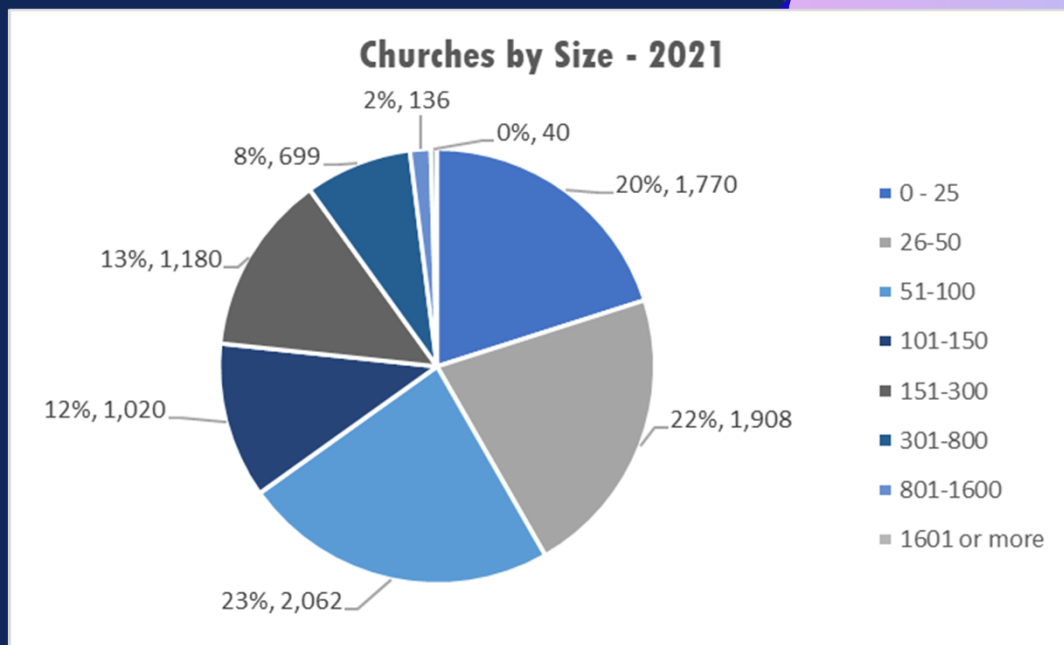
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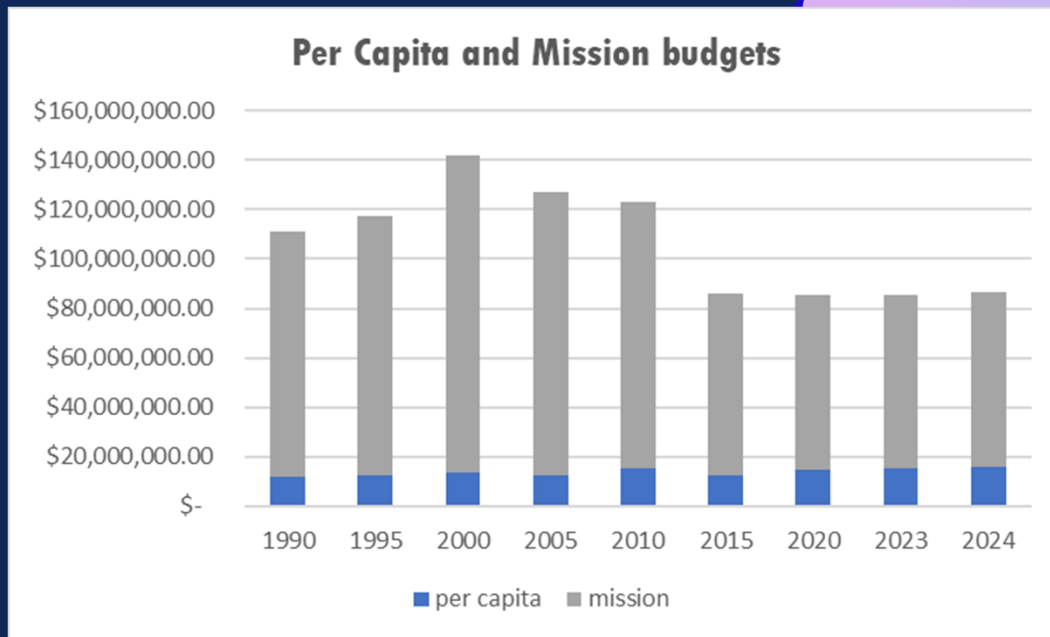
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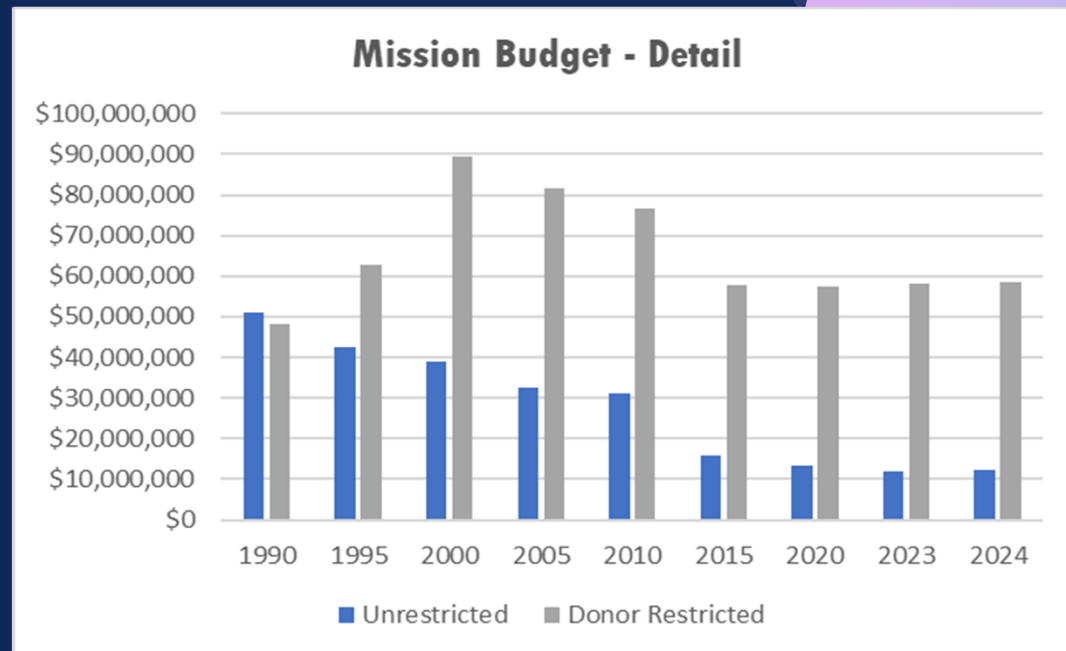
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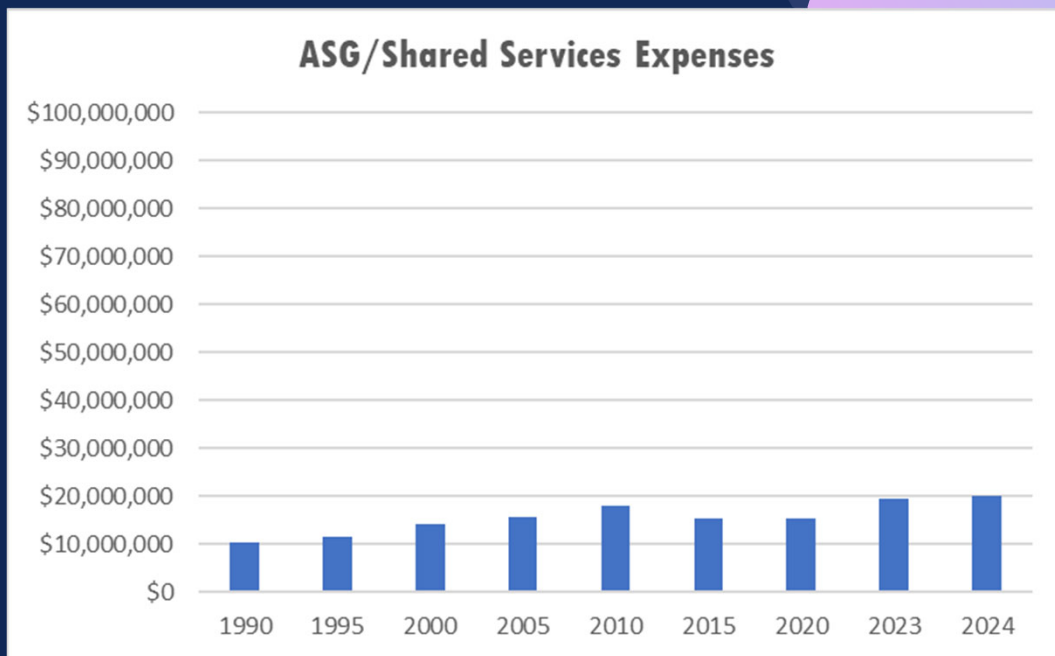
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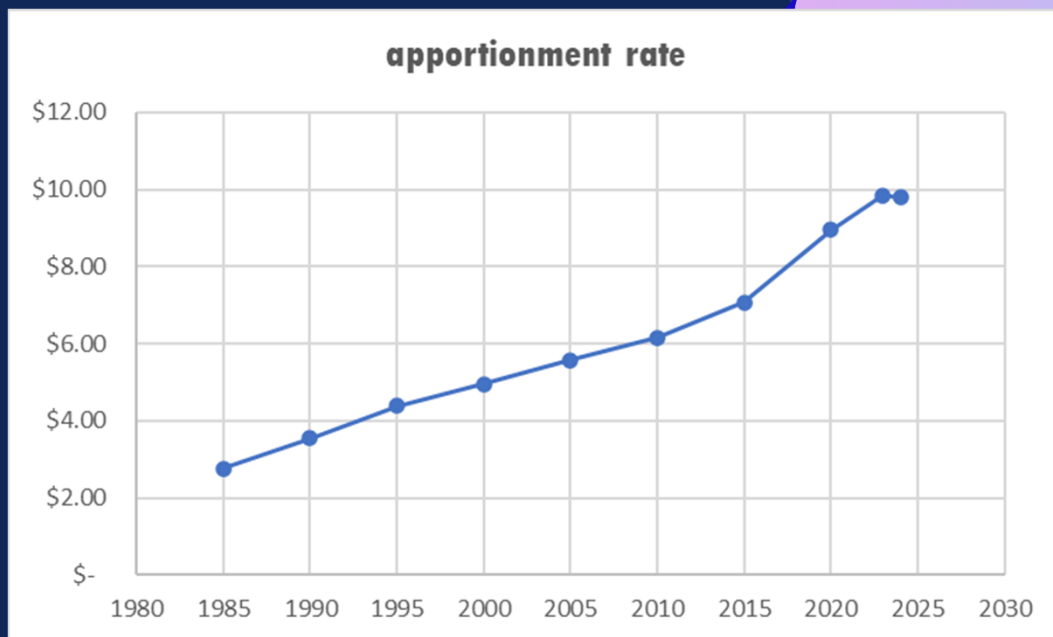
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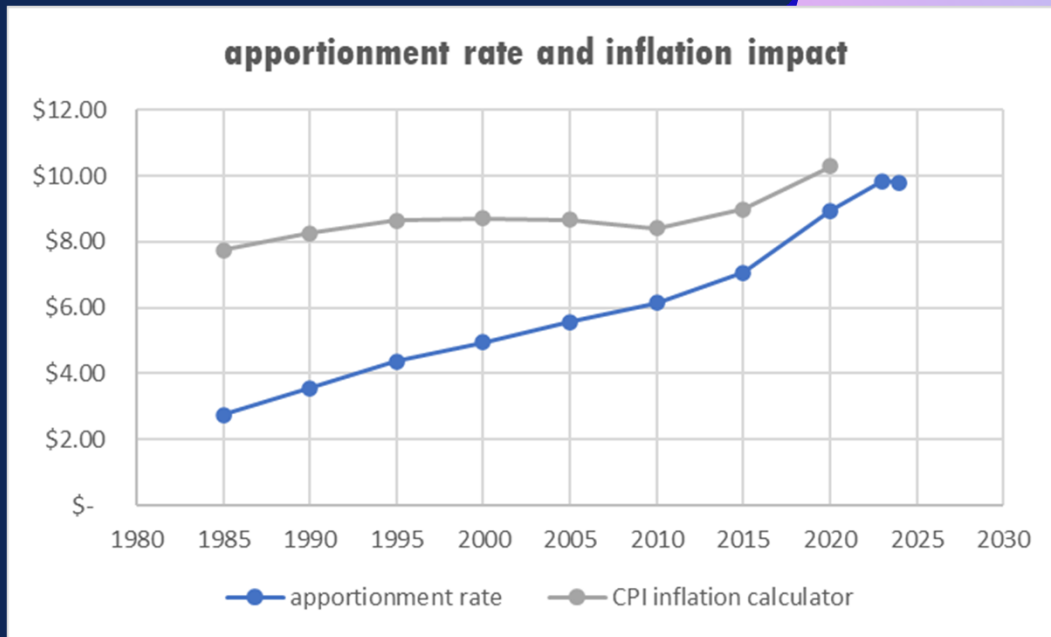
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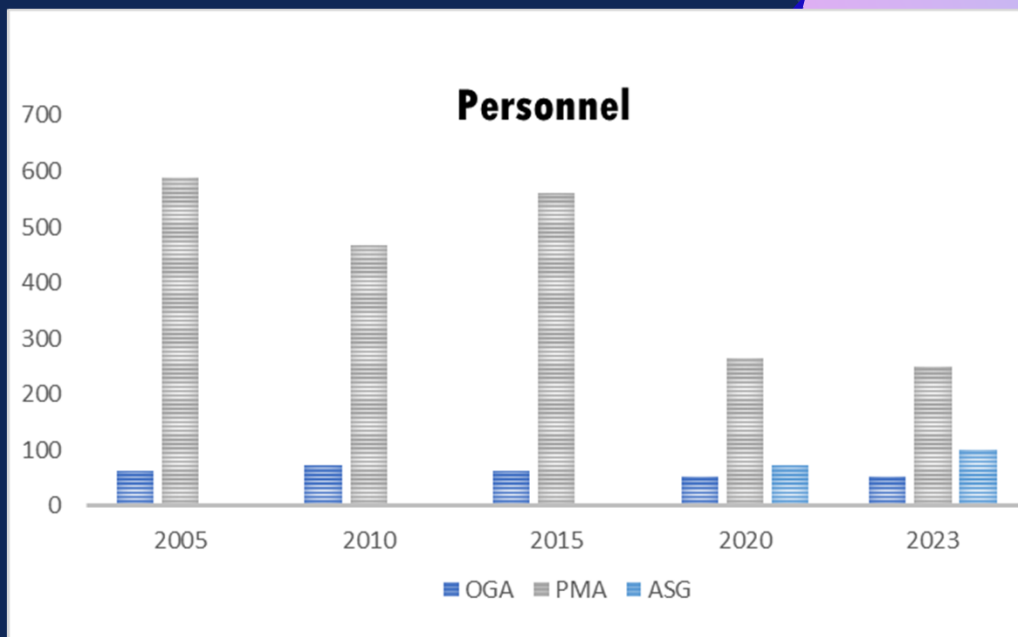
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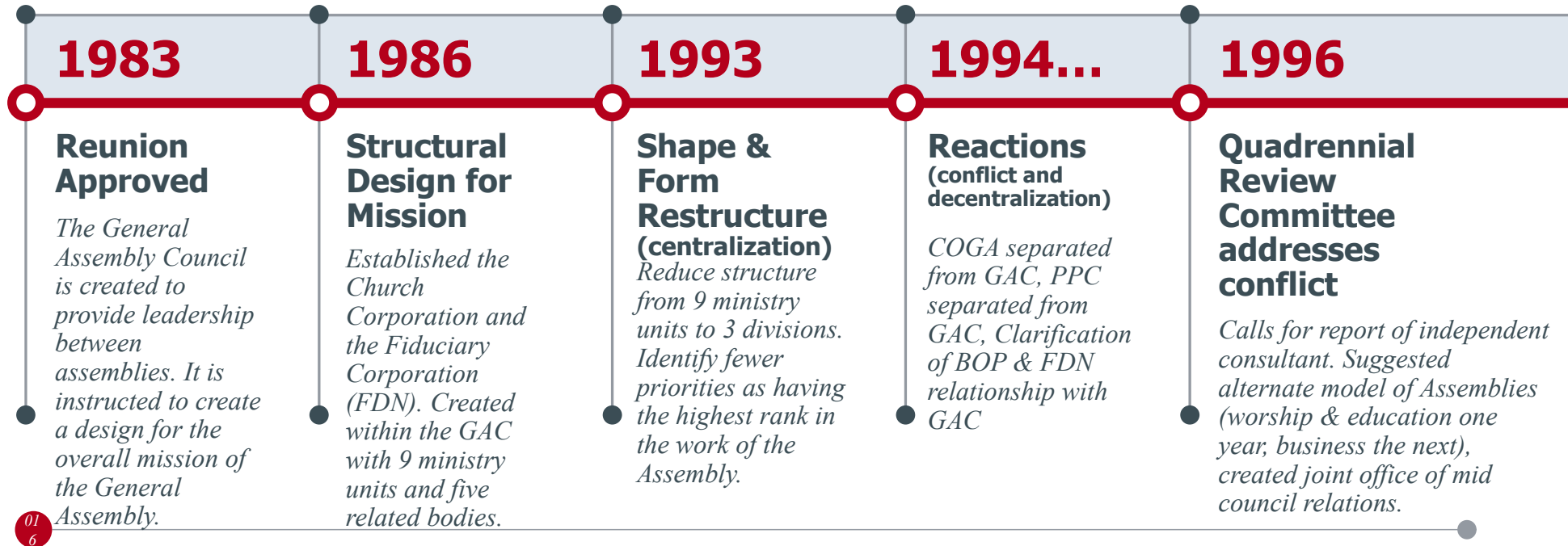


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# Timeline

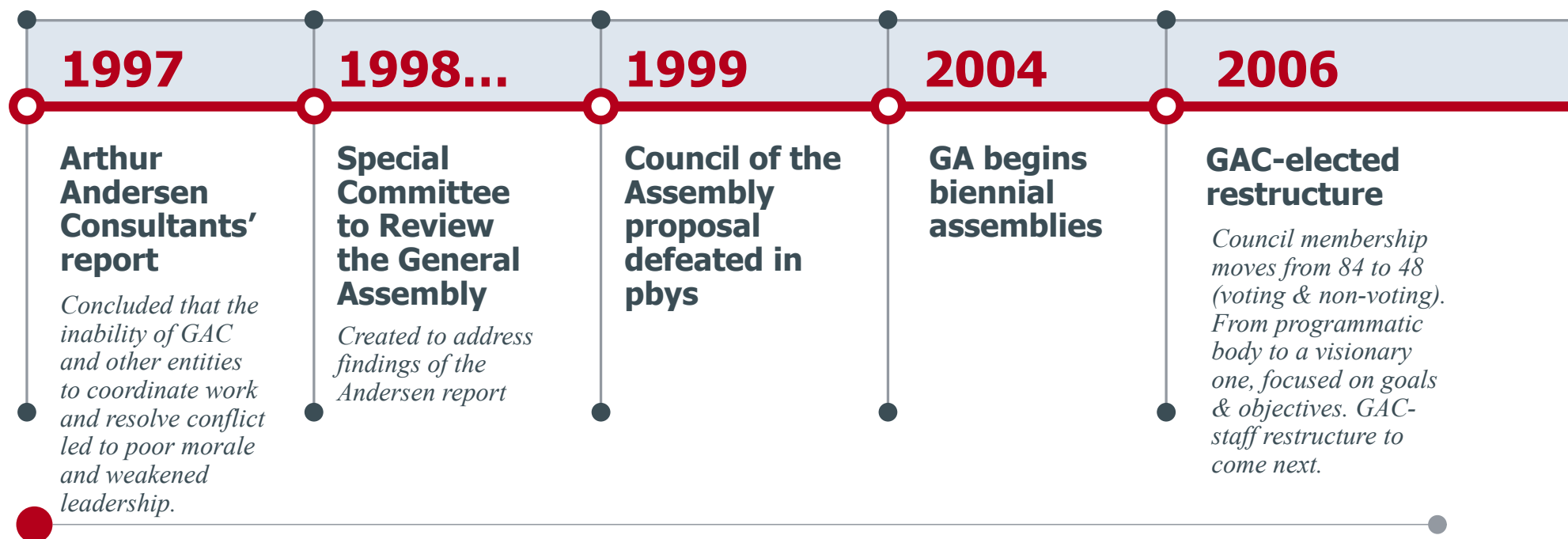
## *PCUSA Structural Evolution*





# Timeline

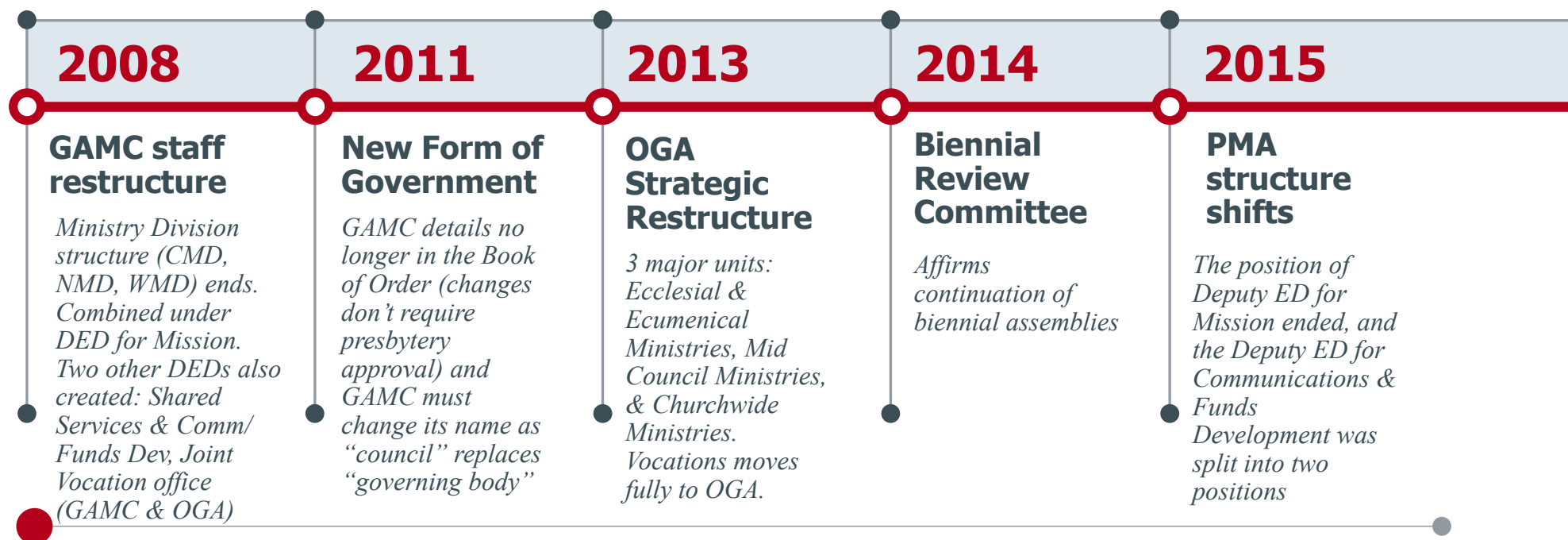
## *PCUSA Structural Evolution*





# Timeline

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## *PCUSA Structural Evolution*

