



First
Presbyterian
Church
of Waynesboro, Virginia

The Columns *Online*

April 27, 2022 | Waynesboro, Virginia | *a newsletter supplement*

**2021 statistical report, shows PC(USA)
is a denomination of small churches and aging membership**

Presbyterian News Service. The 2021 statistical report shows the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) continued nearly 60 years of membership declines. 51,584 members were lost in the past year, bringing total membership down to 1.19 million, a 4.1% decline from 2021, or roughly one third of the 4.2 million members of the PCUS and UPCUSA in 1965.

Churches by Size:

	2018		2019		2020		2021	
0 – 25	1,585	17.3%	1,649	18.2%	1,718	19.2%	1,770	20.1%
26 – 50.....	1,871	20.4%	1,861	20.6%	1,877	21.0%	1,908	21.6%
51 – 100.....	2,154	23.5%	2,115	23.4%	2,104	23.6%	2,062	23.4%
101 – 150.....	1,179	12.9%	1,152	12.8%	1,079	12.1%	1,020	11.6%
151 – 300.....	1,329	14.5%	1,280	14.1%	1,216	13.6%	1,180	13.4%
301 – 800.....	834	9.1%	785	8.7%	745	8.3%	699	7.9%
801 – 1,600.....	161	1.8%	152	1.7%	142	1.6%	136	1.5%
1,601 or more.....	48	0.5%	47	0.5%	44	0.5%	40	0.5%

continued

2021 statistical report *continued*

The denomination overwhelmingly identifies as White and aging, with a third of Presbyterians now 71 or older and nearly sixty percent above the age of 56. Two thirds of PC(USA) congregations have 100 or fewer members, but those congregations account for less than twenty percent of membership.

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Percentage of membership reported:	84%	82%	82%	
Age 25 & Under	129,927	118,795	111,172	11%
Age 26 – 40	163,598	148,984	140,022	14%
Age 41 – 55	186,821	174,652	166,137	17%
Age 56 – 70	278,795	263,432	253,775	26%
Age 71 & Over	339,773	317,333	313,331	32%

104 congregations were dissolved in 2021, leaving the denomination with 8,813 congregations. Only two congregations were dismissed in 2021 to other denominations — a significant drop from the early 2010s when hundreds of congregations left for more conservative denominations. The number of presbyteries also dropped by four in 2021, from 170 to 166, as some mid councils merged and realigned.

The number of ministers also declined in 2021 by 372, but the number of ordinations increased by 11 and the number of candidates for ordination by 13.

Despite these increases, the number of those being ordained each year is not keeping pace with the number of ministers who are retiring or dying.

These trends reflect real problems for many congregations; increasingly, many are unable to

afford full-time ministry, and those that can find the market to be more competitive than in years past.

The 2022 General Assembly will address recommendations and resolutions addressing the financial pressure on churches, and the lack of installed pastoral leadership in small congregations, particularly those comprised primarily of people of color. The assembly will also be asked to consider the role of commissioned ruling elders in the life of the denomination — with many small and rural congregations depending on ruling elders for congregational leadership.



Music Notes.

Easter season continues on May Day, and the choir will sing *Alleluia No. 1* for the anthem. **Donald Fishel** (born 1950) was studying flute at the University of Michigan when he embarked on his career of composition and publication. *Alleluia No. 1* was the first piece written by Fishel, composed in 1971 while he was a college junior. Fishel said the work came to him “rather quickly, in about an hour.” Fishel's compositions can be found in hymnals in Episcopal, Lutheran, Methodist, and Roman Catholic churches.



Fishel.

Our Worship Channels

click on the logos



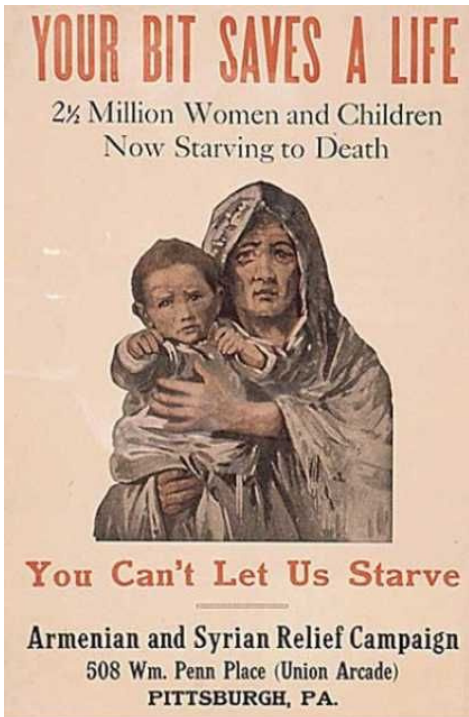
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This Week in History.



Deportation of Armenians from Constantinople begins, triggering first genocide of the modern era.

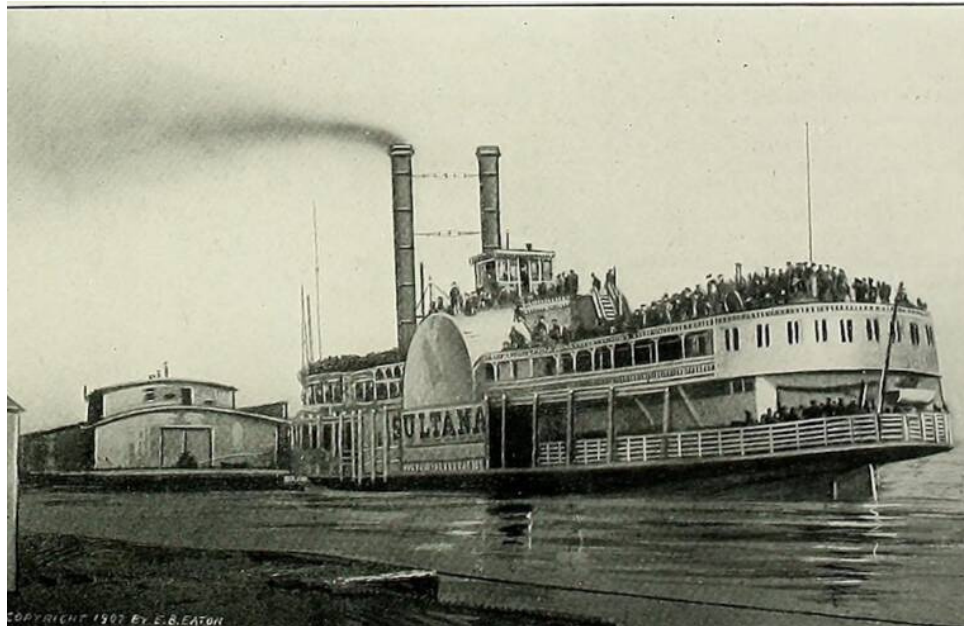
April 24, 1915



Wireless Telegraphy pioneer
Guglielmo Marconi born in Bologna
April 25, 1874



Explosion at Chernobyl
causes catastrophic meltdown
April 26, 1986



More than 1500 Union soldiers, many former prisoners of war, were killed when the overcrowded Steamer *Sultana* exploded north of Memphis, TN on the Mississippi River

April 27, 1865



Acting Lt. Fletcher Christian (L) led a mutiny against Capt. William Bligh (R) of the HMS *Bounty*

April 28, 1789



Riots break after acquittal of Police in the beating of motorist Rodney King

April 29, 1992



George Washington sworn in as first President
at Federal Hall, New York City

April 30, 1789