

## PRESBYTERIAN BODIES

### GENERAL STATEMENT

**History.**—As the Lutheran churches represent those features of the Reformation emphasized by Luther, so the Presbyterian and Reformed churches represent those emphasized by Calvin. The doctrinal and ecclesiastical system developed at Geneva, modified somewhat in Holland and in France and transferred to Scotland, became solidified there largely under the influence of John Knox in 1530 and found a practical and thoroughly logical presentation in the Westminster Assembly, London, England, 1645–1649. This was not a distinctively Presbyterian body. Called by act of Parliament to consider the state of the entire country in matters of religion, it represented in its membership all English-speaking Christians, although the Anglicans took no active part in its deliberations. It had no ecclesiastical authority, yet its deliverances on doctrine have furnished the basis both for Presbyterian and many non-Presbyterian bodies; and the form of ecclesiastical government it recommended has gone far beyond the country where it was formulated and has had a marked influence not only on church life, but in civil and national development. In England it fostered the development of the Independents who afterwards became the Congregationalists. In Scotland, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it resulted in the development of several Presbyterian bodies, each insisting upon some specific administrative phase; and one of its strongholds was the north of Ireland, where so many Scotch found a more congenial home for the time being, until they should cross the Atlantic.

The distinctively Presbyterian churches of the United States trace their origin chiefly to Great Britain. Whatever of English and Welsh Presbyterianism there was in the Colonies, together with the few French Protestant, or Huguenot, churches, combined at an early date with the Scotch and Scotch-Irish elements to form the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, from which the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in the United States afterwards separated. The Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church, representing the Calvinistic Methodists of Wales, was united in 1920 with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.<sup>1</sup>

Five Presbyterian denominations are directly connected with the Secession and Relief movements of the church in Scotland in the eighteenth century: The United Presbyterian Church of North America; the Associate Synod of North America, known also as the Associate Presbyterian Church; the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, formerly the Associate Reformed Synod of the South; the Synod and the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church.

In close harmony with these distinctively Presbyterian churches are the Reformed churches, traceable to the influence of immigration from the Continent of Europe: The Reformed Church in America (Dutch) and the Christian Reformed Church, both of which originated in Holland; the Reformed Church in the United States (German), whose beginnings were in Switzerland and Germany; and the Free Magyar Reformed Church in America, representing the State Reformed Church of Hungary. All of these, Presbyterian and Reformed, substantially agree in government, and all maintain similar principles of the Calvinistic system, whether expressed in the Westminster Confession of Faith, the

<sup>1</sup> See Methodist bodies, p. 914.

**Canons of the Synod of Dort, or the Heidelberg Catechism.** The Alliance of Reformed Churches throughout the world holding the Presbyterian system, whose special purpose is to secure cooperation by the different denominations in general church work, has grown out of this concord, as has also the Council of the Reformed Churches in the United States holding the Presbyterian system, organized for the same general purpose.

**Doctrine and organization.**—Presbyterianism as a doctrinal system has as its fundamental principles the undivided sovereignty of God in His universe, the sovereignty of Christ in salvation, the sovereignty of the Scriptures in faith and conduct, and the sovereignty of the individual conscience in the interpretation of the Word of God. As a polity, it recognizes Christ as the only head of the church and the source of all power, and the people of Christ as entitled under their Lord to participation in the government and action of the church. As polity and as doctrine, it maintains the right of private judgment in matters of religion, the membership in the Church Universal of all who profess the true religion, the validity of church organization, and the power of each association of organizations to prescribe its own terms of communion. It further holds that ministers are peers one of another, and that church authority is positively vested, not in individuals, such as bishops or presbyters, but in representative courts, including the session, the presbytery, and the synod; and in the case of some bodies, especially the larger ones, the general assembly. This principle of coordinate representative authority, by which the individual member of the church has his own share in the conduct of that church, while at the same time he recognizes not merely the headship of Christ but the fellowship in Christ, has given to the system a peculiar hold wherever there has been representative government and has exerted a strong influence modifying both individualistic and hierarchical tendencies. Its advocates call attention to the resemblance between its polity and the political constitution of the United States, in which country it has had its strongest influence, its courts corresponding closely to the local, State, and national organizations.

**Statistics.**—The denominations grouped as the Presbyterian bodies in 1926, in 1916, and in 1906 are listed in the summary table, with the principal statistics as reported for the three periods.

Certain changes are to be noted. The union between the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, under discussion in 1906, was consummated, but a considerable number of the Cumberland Presbyterian churches refused to adopt the plan and continued the old organization. This explains the decrease in the statistics of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church which is shown for both 1916 and 1926. The body reported in 1906 as the Associate Reformed Synod of the South changed its name in 1913 to Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. The single organization reported in 1906 by the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States and Canada later joined the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America, General Synod; the single organization reported in 1906 by the Reformed Presbyterian Church (Covenanted) was listed in 1916 with the Independent churches. In 1920, the five synods of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church were absorbed into the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

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## SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN BODIES, 1926, 1916, AND 1906

DENOMINATION AND CENSUS YEAR	Total number of churches	Number of members	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR		SUNDAY SCHOOLS	
			Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Number of scholars
<b>1926</b>								
<b>Total for the group.....</b>	<b>14,848</b>	<b>2,625,284</b>	<b>13,852</b>	<b>\$443,572,158</b>	<b>14,259</b>	<b>\$87,535,390</b>	<b>13,222</b>	<b>2,001,928</b>
Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.....	8,947	1,894,030	8,437	338,152,743	8,656	63,230,663	8,237	1,407,298
Cumberland Presbyterian Church.....	1,097	67,938	986	3,321,287	961	759,021	765	48,052
Colored Cumberland Presbyterian Church.....	178	10,868	162	353,825	167	80,304	152	5,223
United Presbyterian Church of North America.....	901	171,571	879	29,714,845	890	6,642,820	871	148,668
Presbyterian Church in the United States.....	3,469	451,043	3,148	67,798,658	3,330	15,612,028	2,959	367,795
Associate Synod of North America (Associate Presbyterian Church).....	11	329	10	28,800	11	8,841	6	150
Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.....	143	20,410	139	2,428,100	142	809,883	137	15,998
Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America.....	89	7,166	79	1,427,100	89	851,179	83	7,495
Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America, General Synod.....	13	1,929	12	346,800	13	40,651	12	1,259
<b>1916</b>								
<b>Total for the group.....</b>	<b>15,840</b>	<b>2,255,626</b>	<b>14,328</b>	<b>192,989,599</b>	<b>14,661</b>	<b>40,058,907</b>	<b>13,978</b>	<b>1,947,421</b>
Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.....	9,639	1,611,251	8,677	150,239,123	9,059	80,166,158	8,848	1,381,653
Cumberland Presbyterian Church.....	1,313	72,052	1,150	1,935,072	1,009	830,905	903	53,431
Colored Cumberland Presbyterian Church.....	136	13,077	130	230,426	127	39,497	133	7,471
Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church.....	134	14,566	126	1,012,000	120	173,977	127	10,789
United Presbyterian Church of North America.....	991	160,726	952	13,543,213	974	3,094,945	970	156,072
Presbyterian Church in the United States.....	3,365	357,760	3,041	28,924,915	3,101	5,809,909	2,744	313,165
Associate Synod of North America (Associate Presbyterian Church).....	12	490	12	26,400	12	8,114	5	137
Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.....	133	15,124	128	667,650	133	178,138	128	13,411
Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America.....	103	8,185	98	1,131,600	103	225,263	100	9,498
Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America, General Synod.....	14	2,386	14	279,200	14	32,001	14	1,765

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN BODIES, 1926, 1916, AND 1906—Continued

DENOMINATION AND CENSUS YEAR	Total number of churches	Number of members	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR		SUNDAY SCHOOLS	
			Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Number of scholars
<b>1906</b>								
<b>Total for the group</b> .....	<b>15, 471</b>	<b>1, 830, 555</b>	<b>14, 160</b>	<b>150, 189, 446</b>			<b>13, 048</b>	<b>1, 511, 175</b>
Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.....	7, 927	1, 179, 566	7, 405	114, 882, 781			7, 393	1, 045, 056
Cumberland Presbyterian Church.....	2, 846	195, 770	2, 451	5, 803, 960			1, 817	120, 311
Colored Cumberland Presbyterian Church.....	196	18, 066	192	203, 778			192	6, 952
Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church.....	147	13, 280	145	761, 350			136	11, 347
United Presbyterian Church of North America.....	964	130, 342	943	10, 760, 208			948	115, 963
Presbyterian Church in the United States.....	3, 086	266, 345	2, 734	15, 488, 489			2, 301	189, 767
Associate Synod of North America (Associate Presbyterian Church).....	22	786	19	28, 825			9	289
Associate Reformed Synod of the South.....	141	13, 201	134	436, 550			126	9, 732
Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America.....	113	9, 122	110	1, 258, 105			103	9, 613
Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America, General Synod.....	27	3, 620	26	365, 400			22	2, 013
Reformed Presbyterian Church (Covenanted).....	1	17						
Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States and Canada.....	1	440	1	200, 000			1	132

## ASSOCIATE SYNOD OF NORTH AMERICA (ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH)

### STATISTICS

**Summary for the United States, with urban-rural classification.**—A general summary of the statistics for the Associate Synod of North America (Associate Presbyterian Church) for the year 1926 is presented in Table 1, which shows also the distribution of these figures between urban and rural territory.

The membership of the Associate Presbyterian Church consists of those who have been received on profession of faith or certificate and are thus admitted to the full privileges of the church.

**TABLE 1.—SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR CHURCHES IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY, 1926: ASSOCIATE SYNOD OF NORTH AMERICA (ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH)**

ITEM	Total	In urban territory <sup>1</sup>	In rural territory <sup>1</sup>	PER CENT OF TOTAL <sup>2</sup>	
				Urban	Rural
Churches (local organizations).....	11	3	8		
Members.....	329	103	226	31.3	68.7
Average per church.....	30	34	28		
Membership by sex:					
Male.....	126	36	90	28.6	71.4
Female.....	203	67	136	33.0	67.0
Males per 100 females.....	62.1		66.2		
Membership by age:					
Under 13 years.....					
13 years and over.....	329	103	226	31.3	68.7
Church edifices:					
Number.....	10	3	7		
Value—Churches reporting.....	10	3	7		
Amount reported.....	\$28,800	\$12,500	\$16,300	43.4	56.6
Average per church.....	\$2,880	\$4,167	\$2,329		
Debt—Churches reporting.....	1	1			
Amount reported.....	\$1,000	\$1,000		100.0	
Churches reporting "no debt" on church edifice.....	8	1	7		
Parsonages:					
Value—Churches reporting.....	1		1		
Amount reported.....	\$3,000		\$3,000		100.0
Debt—Churches reporting.....	1		1		
Amount reported.....	\$500		\$500		100.0
Expenditures during year:					
Churches reporting.....	11	3	8		
Amount reported.....	\$8,841	\$3,537	\$5,304	40.0	60.0
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$6,586	\$2,620	\$3,966	39.8	60.2
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$2,255	\$917	\$1,338	40.7	59.3
Average expenditure per church.....	\$804	\$1,179	\$663		
Sunday schools:					
Churches reporting.....	6	2	4		
Officers and teachers.....	14	5	9		
Scholars.....	150	48	102	32.0	68.0

<sup>1</sup> Urban territory includes all cities and other incorporated places which had 2,500 inhabitants or more in 1920, the date of the last Federal census; rural territory comprises the remainder of the country.

<sup>2</sup> Per cent not shown where base is less than 100.

The data given for 1926 represent 11 active Associate Presbyterian churches, with 329 members. The classification of membership by sex and age was reported by all of the 11 churches, none of which reported any members under 13 years of age.

**Comparative data, 1890-1926.**—Table 2 presents, in convenient form for comparison, a summary of the available statistics of this denomination for the censuses of 1926, 1916, 1906, and 1890.

**TABLE 2.—COMPARATIVE SUMMARY, 1890 TO 1926: ASSOCIATE SYNOD OF NORTH AMERICA (ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH)**

ITEM	1926	1916	1906	1890
<b>Churches (local organizations)</b> .....	11	12	22	31
Increase <sup>1</sup> over preceding census:				
Number.....	-1	-10	-9	
Per cent <sup>2</sup> .....				
<b>Members</b> .....	329	490	786	1,053
Increase <sup>1</sup> over preceding census:				
Number.....	-161	-296	-267	
Per cent.....	-32.9	-37.7	-25.4	
Average membership per church.....	30	41	36	34
<b>Church edifices:</b>				
Number.....	10	12	19	23
Value—Churches reporting.....	10	12	19	
Amount reported.....	\$28,800	\$26,400	\$28,825	\$29,200
Average per church.....	\$2,880	\$2,200	\$1,517	
Debt—Churches reporting.....	1			
Amount reported.....	\$1,000			
<b>Parsonages:</b>				
Value—Churches reporting.....	1	1		
Amount reported.....	\$3,000	\$2,500		
Debt—Churches reporting.....	1			
Amount reported.....	\$500			
<b>Expenditures during year:</b>				
Churches reporting.....	11	12		
Amount reported.....	\$3,841	\$3,114		
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$6,586	\$6,301		
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$2,255	\$1,813		
Average expenditure per church.....	\$304	\$276		
<b>Sunday schools:</b>				
Churches reporting.....	6	5	9	
Officers and teachers.....	14	12	13	
Scholars.....	150	137	289	

<sup>1</sup> A minus sign (-) denotes decrease.

<sup>2</sup> Per cent not shown where base is less than 100.

**State tables.**—Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6 present the statistics for the Associate Presbyterian Church by States. Table 3 gives for each State the number and membership of the churches classified according to their location in urban or rural territory and the total membership classified by sex. Table 4 gives for selected States the number and membership of the churches for the three censuses from 1906 to 1926. Table 5 shows the value of church property, for 1926 alone. Table 6 presents, for 1926, the church expenditures, showing separately the amounts expended for current expenses and improvements, and for benevolences, etc., and also gives the data for Sunday schools. Separate presentation in Tables 5 and 6 is limited to those States in which three or more churches reported the principal items shown (values or expenditures), in order to avoid disclosing the financial statistics of any individual church. The States omitted from these tables can be determined by referring to the complete list which appears in Table 3.

**Ecclesiastical divisions.**—Table 7 presents, for each presbytery in the Associate Presbyterian Church, the more important statistical data shown by States in the earlier tables, including number of churches, membership, value of church edifices, debt on church edifices, expenditures, and Sunday schools.

**TABLE 3.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY, AND TOTAL MEMBERSHIP BY SEX, BY STATES, 1926: ASSOCIATE SYNOD OF NORTH AMERICA (ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH)**

GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION AND STATE	NUMBER OF CHURCHES			NUMBER OF MEMBERS			TOTAL MEMBERSHIP BY SEX		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Male	Female	Males per 100 females (1)
United States.....	11	3	8	329	103	226	126	203	62.1
Middle Atlantic:									
Pennsylvania.....	4	1	3	132	18	114	51	81	-----
East North Central:									
Indiana.....	1	-----	1	14	-----	14	5	9	-----
West North Central:									
Iowa.....	3	2	1	113	85	28	40	73	-----
Kansas.....	3	-----	3	70	-----	70	30	40	-----

<sup>1</sup> Ratio not shown where number of females is less than 100.

**TABLE 4.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES, BY STATES, 1906 TO 1926: ASSOCIATE SYNOD OF NORTH AMERICA (ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH)**

[Separate presentation is limited to States having 3 or more churches in either 1926, 1916, or 1906]

STATE	NUMBER OF CHURCHES			NUMBER OF MEMBERS		
	1926	1916	1906	1926	1916	1906
United States.....	11	12	22	329	490	786
Pennsylvania.....	4	4	8	132	162	327
Indiana.....	1	1	3	14	20	57
Iowa.....	3	4	5	113	199	237
Kansas.....	3	3	4	70	109	144
Other States.....	-----	-----	2	-----	-----	21

**TABLE 5.—VALUE OF CHURCH PROPERTY, AND CHURCH DEBT, BY STATES, 1926: ASSOCIATE SYNOD OF NORTH AMERICA (ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH)**

[Separate presentation is limited to States having 3 or more churches reporting value of edifices]

STATE	Total number of churches	Number of church edifices	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		DEBT ON CHURCH EDIFICES	
			Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount
United States.....	11	10	10	\$28,800	1	\$1,000
Pennsylvania.....	4	4	4	11,800	-----	-----
Iowa.....	3	3	3	13,000	1	1,000
Other States.....	4	3	3	4,000	-----	-----

**TABLE 6.—CHURCH EXPENDITURES AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BY STATES, 1926:**  
ASSOCIATE SYNOD OF NORTH AMERICA (ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH)

[Separate presentation is limited to States having 3 or more churches reporting expenditures]

STATE	Total number of churches	EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR				SUNDAY SCHOOLS		
		Churches reporting	Total amount	For current expenses and improvements	For benevolences, missions, etc.	Churches reporting	Officers and teachers	Scholars
United States.....	11	11	\$8,841	\$6,586	\$2,255	6	14	159
Pennsylvania.....	4	4	3,715	2,740	975	2	5	46
Indiana.....	1	4	13,564	12,682	1882	3	8	86
Iowa.....	3							
Kansas.....	3	3	1,562	1,164	398	1	1	18

<sup>1</sup> Figures for Indiana and Iowa combined, to avoid disclosing the statistics of individual churches.

**TABLE 7.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES, VALUE OF EDIFICES, DEBT, EXPENDITURES, AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BY PRESBYTERIES, 1926:** ASSOCIATE SYNOD OF NORTH AMERICA (ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH)

PRESBYTERY	Total number of churches	Number of members	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		DEBT ON CHURCH EDIFICES		EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR		SUNDAY SCHOOLS	
			Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Number of scholars
Total.....	11	329	10	\$28,800	1	\$1,000	11	\$8,841	6	159
Clarion.....	5	146	5	12,800			5	3,940	2	46
Iowa.....	6	183	5	16,000	1	1,000	6	4,901	4	104

## HISTORY, DOCTRINE, AND ORGANIZATION <sup>1</sup>

### DENOMINATIONAL HISTORY

The Associate Synod of North America, generally known as the Associate Presbyterian Church, is the direct descendant of the first secession from the Established Church of Scotland in November, 1733. At that time four ministers—Ebenezer Erskine, William Wilson, Alexander Moncrieff, and James Fisher—withdrew from the state church, holding that the law of patronage, which deprived the people of any voice in the choice of a pastor, was tyrannical and contrary to the spirit and principles of Presbyterianism. They formed, on December 6, an Associate Presbytery, but did not act judicially as a presbytery until 1735. In 1737 four other ministers joined them. The movement became popular and developed into the Associate Synod.

To meet the needs of the families which emigrated to this country, this synod sent two missionaries in the fall of 1753, who were reinforced from time to time by others who came out from the mother church, and in 1754 organized the Associate Presbytery. Meanwhile representatives of the Reformed Presbyterian

<sup>1</sup> This statement, which is substantially the same as that published in Part II of the Report on Religious Bodies, 1916, has been revised by Mr. A. M. Malcolm, stated clerk, Associate Synod of North America, and approved by him in its present form.

(Covenanter) Church had also come, forming in 1774 what was known as the Reformed Presbytery. In 1782 the two bodies, the Associate Presbytery and the Reformed Presbytery, united, taking the name of Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. Two ministers and three ruling elders, however, refused to enter this union and continued the organization of the Associate Presbytery of Pennsylvania, which was recognized by the mother (Secession) Synod of Scotland. Other presbyteries were organized, and in 1801 they developed into the Associate Synod of North America. In 1858 this Associate Synod and the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church effected a union, under the name of the United Presbyterian Church of North America.<sup>2</sup> Eleven ministers refused to enter this union and continued the Associate Presbyterian Church.

#### DOCTRINE

In doctrine the church is Calvinistic, adhering to the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, and has a published testimony (the Associate Testimony) explaining its position on many doctrinal points more fully than does the Westminster Confession. It encourages public solemn covenanting, provides against occasional communion, opposes secret societies, and prescribes the exclusive use of the Psalms in praise services.

#### ORGANIZATION

In polity or government this branch of the church differs in no essential element from other Presbyterian churches. The session is the local court, made up of ruling elders elected by the people, and associated with the pastor. The next higher court is the presbytery, having jurisdiction over the churches of a given territory, and is made up of the ministers resident in this territory, together with a representative elder from each pastoral charge. To this court belongs the prerogative of judging the qualifications of candidates for the ministry. The synod is the court superior to the presbytery. This branch of the church being small, the synod is the highest court, or court of last resort.

#### WORK

The only home missionary work is that which itinerant ministers perform in congregations without stated pastors and is carried on under the jurisdiction of the various presbyteries. The financial support is chiefly from the congregations thus served, though it is supplemented by general contributions. The amount contributed for 1926 was \$2,225.

The foreign missionary work of the synod is carried on in Seoni, in the Central Provinces of India, jointly with the United Original Secession Synod of Scotland. This work was begun by the Scottish Synod in 1872, and the American Synod has been associated with it for about 20 years. From Seoni, as the chief center of work, six villages are occupied. The report for 1916 shows 1 church organization, with 95 members; 1 American missionary, with 2 Scottish and 16 native helpers; 3 schools, with 407 pupils; 1 dispensary, treating during the year 1,659 patients; and 2 orphanages, with 42 inmates. The contributions for this work during the year were \$975.

There is a Sunday school in Seoni, having an average attendance of about 100 pupils, and in all the outstations Sunday schools are held, with an attendance ranging from 20 to 60.

The synod has no college or other school under its jurisdiction in the United States and carries on no institutional work.

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<sup>2</sup> See United Presbyterian Church, p. 1159.