

If you are not currently the Clerk of Session, PLEASE (1) pass this information to the person who is now the Clerk of Session and (2) send the new clerk's name, phone number, e-mail, and the name/location of your congregation to statedclerk@cayugasyracuse.org. THANK YOU! This information was compiled by Susan Orr, Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley, and I am very grateful to our sister presbytery for their assistance with this very important process!

To: Clerks of Session, the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse
Date: December 12, 2018

Welcome to **Annual Statistics Time!** I can hear you cheering. Here is information and some suggestions that will assist you in completing your congregation's annual report.

Everything you need for completing the report is available on-line:

- The report forms are entirely online and are already available to begin entry work.
- You do not have to enter all the data at one time. Hitting the 'Accept' button at the bottom of a page saves the data. You may exit and return to enter additional information at a later time.
- The deadline to submit the report is **February 1st**.

The link is: <http://oga.pcusa.org/stats>. **Do not use "www."** That won't work. This link connects you to a page titled "Statistical Reporting and Frequently Asked Questions". Click either link (labeled "Access the year-end statistics online reporting system" or "Go to the Online Statistics Entry System") to enter the Church Statistics System.

You will be prompted to enter your church's PIN and password.

REMEMBER:

- **The church pin is 5 numbers. You may need to add a 0 if your pin only has 4.**
- **The password requires an exclamation point at the end:**

Example: Username -- 01234

Password -- A1B2C3! (The password is case-sensitive, so if the letters are in caps, use caps). **Don't forget the exclamation point!**

If your attempt fails, try again. If you try three times, you'll get a notice that you've been locked out. Take heart! The national office automatically unlocks blocked churches every couple of hours.

- If you do not know your user name or password, email statedclerk@cayugasyracuse.org.
- There are four tabs (categories) of information requested:

Church: Please review and update all church information, including church website and email address.

Clerk: Please review and update clerk information, including your contact information.

Statistics: *more on that below*

Supplemental Questions: This final tab is completely new. Unlike the statistical section, which is mandated by the General Assembly and the Book of Order, the supplemental questions are optional. The information will be used collectively by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA) and are not published. This tab will also close at the end of statistics season.

Regarding the **Statistics section**, as you may have heard, there are a few changes to the procedure this year. Here are a few highlights:

- **There is no longer a workbook being produced.** The program has been updated to include both helpful tools and definitions on each page to complete the process. PDFs have been created related to the questions and definitions being asked.
- The statistic pages look different! They include instructions right next to each question.

- The requested information is categorized differently. There are fewer pages to complete and the pages themselves are labeled differently (ex. Congregational Life)
- Some of the information requested is different from previous years: some are new questions; others have been deleted.

SOME IMPORTANT PIECES OF ADVICE

1. The beginning **Membership** figure. This is your starting point.
 - **If you missed entering statistics last year or the last two years (or more), you'll have to do two (or three) years of work at this time.** [Note: All but three of our churches in Cayuga-Syracuse submitted reports last year so the rest of you are in good shape!]
 - a) Prepare by listing ALL the various gains and losses over the time period since you last submitted a statistical report.
 - b) Enter the appropriate numbers in the appropriate boxes.
 - c) Your total will be the now accurate membership figure for your church. That total will be the starting number next year.

For every other entry section, the "snapshot" is of your congregation NOW. Enter what is true for your church now. *Example:* the financial statistics are for this year, 2018. The previous one or two years are not relevant to this part of this year's report.
2. With regard to the Age Distribution of Christian Education and Age Distribution of Members, do your best guesswork. Do not fret if you are not sure if a particular person is over 70 or under. Remember that this part of the report is a snapshot.
3. With respect to the **financial information:** The way the reporting is set up, you should be able to find everything you need on your copy of your 2018 Church Budget.

To Recap

1. A helpful new feature is that each question is accompanied by an explanation.
2. When you are finished with a particular section (e.g. Membership Stats) you may click "submit." In other words, you will be able to submit each portion of the report separately. If you should find an error, you may return to that section prior to the February 1st deadline date, make the correction, and click "submit" again. **NOTE:** There is no final SUBMIT button at the end of the report. You will continue to have access to make changes up until the February 1st deadline date. Information is submitted each time you hit ACCEPT on each page.
3. Do not, **do not, DO NOT** wait for your Session meeting to enter your statistical information. The Session does not approve the report. It **receives** the report. You may begin entering information at any time, and do not have to complete a page in one sitting. Complete your data entry **before February 1st**. NOTE: The links are available NOW to begin this work.
4. Follow the directions for **printing a copy** of your report. This is very important, because you need to put a copy of the report in your session minutes.
 - At the session meeting following statistical report submission, present the copy of the report for session to **receive**. This report is received by the SESSION, not the congregation.
 - And . . . you do not have to wait for session's approval to submit statistics. Their action is to *receive* the report, not to approve it.

.....

Thank you so much for your service! Please let me know if you have any questions. I will try to answer them, or I will put you in touch with someone who can!

Linda Russell
 Chair, Leadership Team
 Email: statedclerk@cayugasyracuse.org