

colaborate
Presbyterian Confirmation
Student Handbook

Presbyterian History & Doctrine

Sampler

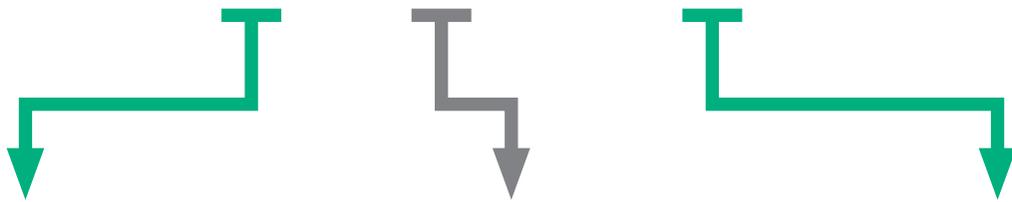
SPARK
HOUSE

colaborate

Student Handbook

The centerpiece of the Colaborate: Presbyterian Confirmation curriculum is the student handbook. Each handbook contains fifteen lessons with each lesson working through four pages of handbook content. The Colaborate handbook guides students through a process of discovery with intriguing questions, in-depth information, and punchy graphics. Each page of the handbook serves a specific purpose that pulls students into the content.

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FRAMING THE PROBLEM

An opening infographic sets up the tension for the lesson, explicitly centering on student assumptions, biases, even disinterest. After students work through the first page, they'll watch a short animated video that heightens the tension through hyperbole, stereotypes, and misinformation. It is intentionally—and age-appropriately—provocative to build interest and get students thinking about the topic.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The center spread of the lesson equips students to work through the tension created on page one. It features an infographic that presents content in a memorable, visually powerful way, incorporating Bible passages, Presbyterian doctrine, and historical context to help give students a stronger sense of the theology behind each lesson. Students are invited to interact with the content by drawing, asking and answering questions, and sharing their ideas with a partner or the group.

PROJECT AND CLOSING

The final page of each lesson solidifies the concepts through two activities—an individual writing activity and an active group project. No pipe cleaners? No problem. Every project in Colaborate can be done with materials you have on hand—paper, pencils, tape, scissors. You'd be surprised how much stuff you can create with just these simple supplies. These activities give students opportunities to articulate what they've discovered, share their thoughts with others, and engage with the broader church community.

Videos

The animated Colaborate videos aren't meant to stand alone. They don't give answers and they won't guide your class discussion. In fact, they might leave you scratching your head a bit. And that's fantastic. These short videos use humor, exaggeration, and assumptions to tease out the problem statement of each lesson. The retro feel of the videos plays off of students' perceptions of church as outdated and irrelevant, while the off-beat humor and quirky narration keep your students engaged as they start to ask new questions about some very old ideas.

Reformed and Always Reforming

Hitting the road

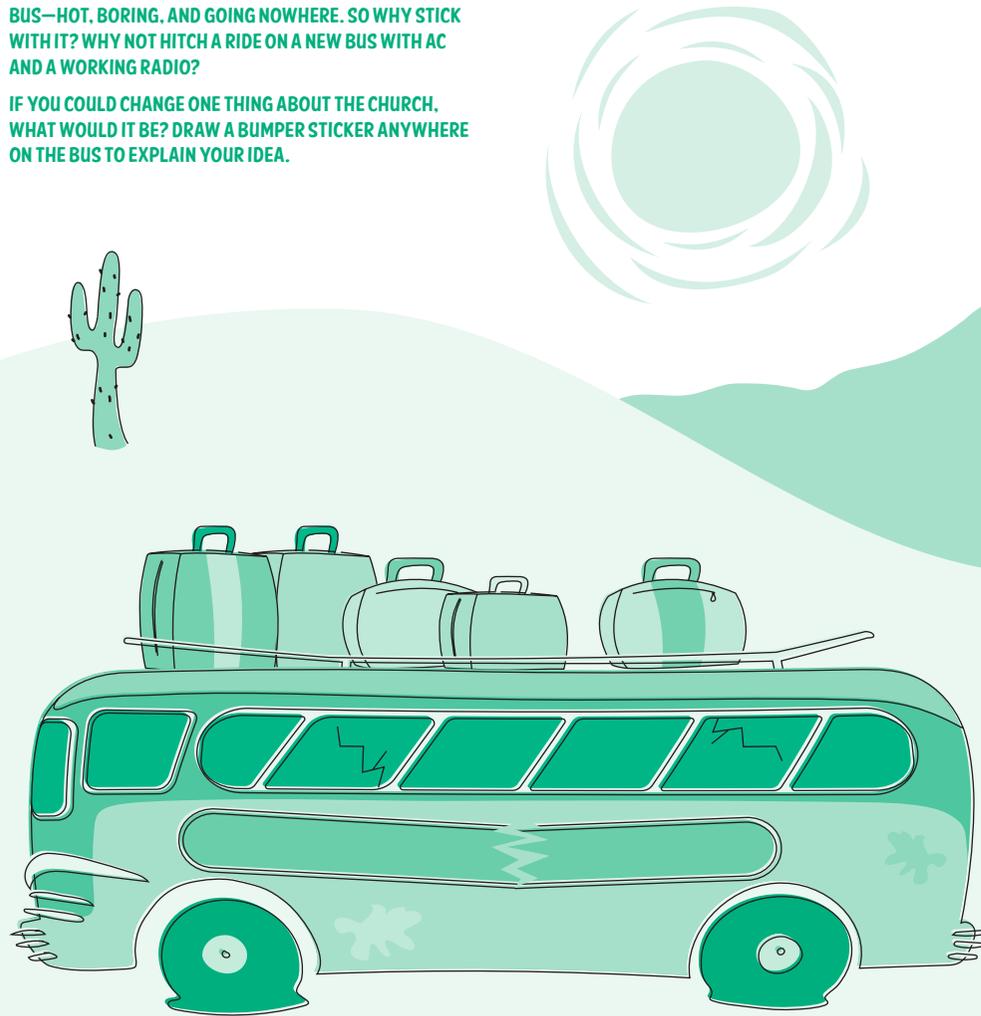
The Presbyterian Church has gone through a lot of changes since it was founded. And it's almost guaranteed to change again as we follow God's movement in the world and try to live faithfully. So the big question is, what part will you play in helping the church to keep moving forward?

SOMETIMES THE CHURCH CAN FEEL LIKE A BROKEN-DOWN BUS—HOT, BORING, AND GOING NOWHERE. SO WHY STICK WITH IT? WHY NOT HITCH A RIDE ON A NEW BUS WITH AC AND A WORKING RADIO?

IF YOU COULD CHANGE ONE THING ABOUT THE CHURCH, WHAT WOULD IT BE? DRAW A BUMPER STICKER ANYWHERE ON THE BUS TO EXPLAIN YOUR IDEA.

Acts 15:16-17

“After this I will return, and I will rebuild the dwelling of David, which has fallen; from its ruins I will rebuild it, and I will set it up, so that all other peoples may seek the Lord—even all the Gentiles over whom my name has been called.”



WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO? WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

THE TOUR GUIDE DIDN'T TELL US ABOUT THIS....



YOUR ROAD

Use the road to create a personal timeline of your involvement in the church. When were you baptized? How many churches have you attended in your life? What was the name of your first Sunday school teacher or pastor? What's one experience you've had with church that made an impression on you, either good or bad?



WATCH OUT!

The road of faith can be bumpy and dangerous, even for the church. Draw a pothole on the road and write down a time the church has planned something that hasn't gone well, or a time you've disagreed with a change your church made.

The church doesn't seem to change much, so why stick around?

Our History, Our People

While it may seem like the church is sometimes stuck or even broken down, our history is filled with people who took on the challenge of pushing the church out of its ruts and repairing its broken places.

AS WITH ALL DENOMINATIONS, PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY IS MARKED BY ARGUMENTS, MOMENTS OF PROPHETIC INSIGHT, TIMES OF GROWTH, TIMES OF BAD JUDGMENT, AND OPPORTUNITIES TO CORRECT PAST BLIND SPOTS. THANKFULLY, OUR FOUNDERS GAVE US A ROADMAP FOR KNOWING WHEN TO TURN AROUND AND WHEN TO KEEP MOVING. OUR MOTTO IS "REFORMED AND ALWAYS REFORMING." THAT MEANS WE'RE CONSTANTLY LISTENING FOR GOD'S GUIDANCE TO DIRECT OUR CHURCH AND OUR LIVES.

1789

PRESBY-WHATERY?

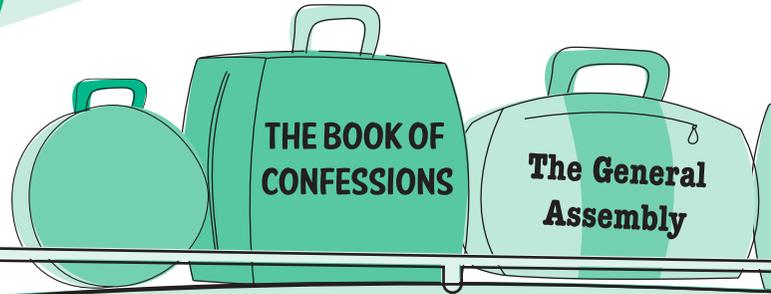
In 1789, the first grouping of Reformed churches in the United States, called a presbytery, is formed in Philadelphia. The idea was that a group of churches could make better decisions and be stronger in mission and service together than individually. The PC(USA) is still organized in this way.

What are the pros and cons of churches working together instead of working independently?
Discuss your thoughts with a partner.

Bag Check

If you're going on a long trip, you'd better bring some supplies. As the PC(USA) has reformed—and always reformed—it has captured its ideas in books, in practices, and in its structure. You'll learn more about some of these over the course of confirmation and discover how they equip the church to handle the challenges that come next.

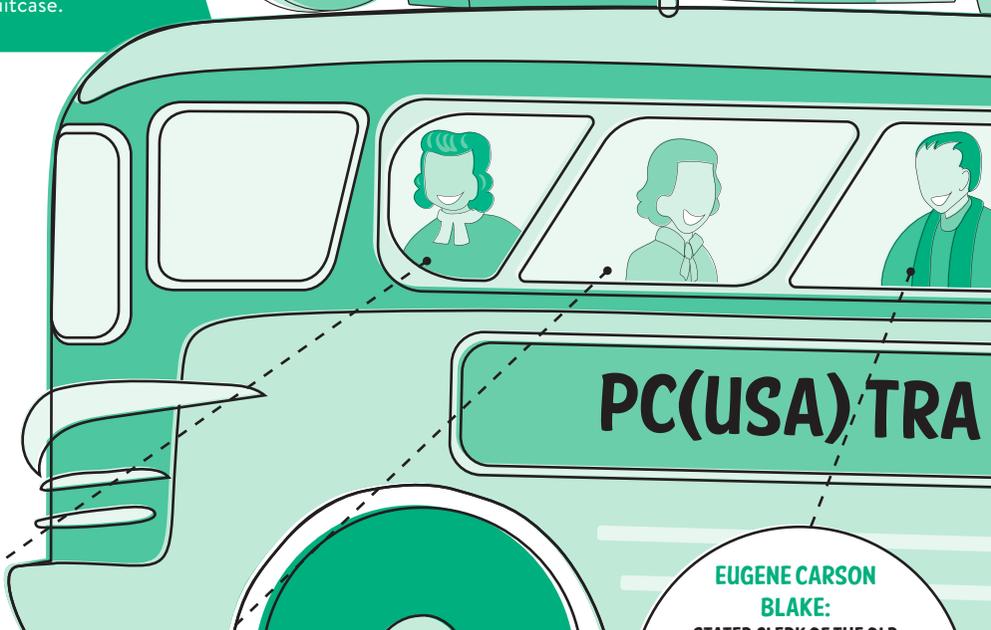
Think about the issues facing the world right now. What should the church be thinking about? Where should we be working? Write your thoughts on the blank suitcase.



Who's on the Bus?

A church is more than a building. It's people. And our history is filled with people who have pushed the church to grow and change, even when it was difficult. Take a look at the passengers on the bus to get to know a few of them.

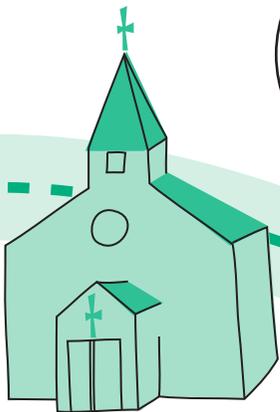
In the empty windows, draw some of the people you know who are working to make things better in your church or community. Maybe it's you!



JOHN WITHERSPOON:
THE ONLY CLERGYPERSON TO SIGN BOTH THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND THE CONSTITUTION.

MARGARET TOWNER:
FIRST WOMAN ORDAINED AS A PRESBYTERIAN PASTOR, 1946.

EUGENE CARSON BLAKE:
STATED CLERK OF THE OLD NORTHERN CHURCH FROM 1951 TO 1966. HE BROUGHT PRESBYTERIANS' SOCIAL JUSTICE THEOLOGY INTO FOCUS THROUGH HIS EFFORTS AT DESEGREGATION AND HIS SPEECH AT THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON IN 1963.



REFORMATION IN YOUR CHURCH

OUR PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY TELLS US THAT WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN INVOLVED IN MAKING THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE. WORK WITH A PARTNER TO THINK OF SOME WAYS YOUR CHURCH IS INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY. HOW COULD YOU JOIN IN WITH THESE ACTIVITIES?

YOUR TURN

As a part of the PC(USA), you are a part of the "reformed and always reforming" tradition. The church needs you, the way it needed countless people before you, to help guide it into the future.

What's one need you see in the world right now? How can the church help? Write the current year in the blank sign and list some of your ideas on the road ahead.

1861

THE BIG SPLIT

The church splits into the Northern church and the Southern church over the issue of slavery. The Northern church wanted to abolish slavery; the Southern church did not.

1951

A NATIONAL PROFILE

The Presbyterian Church is the first denomination to support desegregation after the landmark Supreme Court ruling, *Brown vs. the Board of Education*. Eugene Carson Blake keeps the church in the national spotlight as he works for racial justice and reconciliation.

Why would the church be concerned about racial justice? Write your thoughts on the road.

THE BOOK OF ORDER

BIBLE

Governance

What we call Presbyterianism began in Scotland in 1560. When Scottish Presbyterians came to the United States in the 1700s, they established new churches. In 2015, there were more than 1.5 million active members of the PC(USA).

VEL COMPANY

DENISE ANDERSON AND JAN EDMISTON: FIRST MODERATOR PAIR IN WHICH BOTH WERE WOMEN; ELECTED IN 2016.

JOHN GLOUCESTER: STARTED THE FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S., 1811; **JOHN B. PINNEY:** FIRST FOREIGN MISSIONARY OF THE PC(USA) GOES TO LIBERIA, 1833; **WILLIAM SPEER:** STARTED THE FIRST CHINESE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S., 1853; **LARISSA KWONG ABAZIA:** FIRST ASIAN-AMERICAN WOMAN ELECTED AS VICE MODERATOR OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 2014.



ALWAYS A REBEL

KING GEORGE III OF ENGLAND ONCE CALLED THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION "THE PRESBYTERIAN REBELLION."

2014

ALWAYS REFORMING

The PC(USA) votes to allow people of all gender identities and sexual orientations to be ordained as ministers of word and sacrament.

What are some ways this decision might have been difficult for some leaders in the church? What does it tell you about what it means to be "always reforming"?

1983

BACK TOGETHER AGAIN

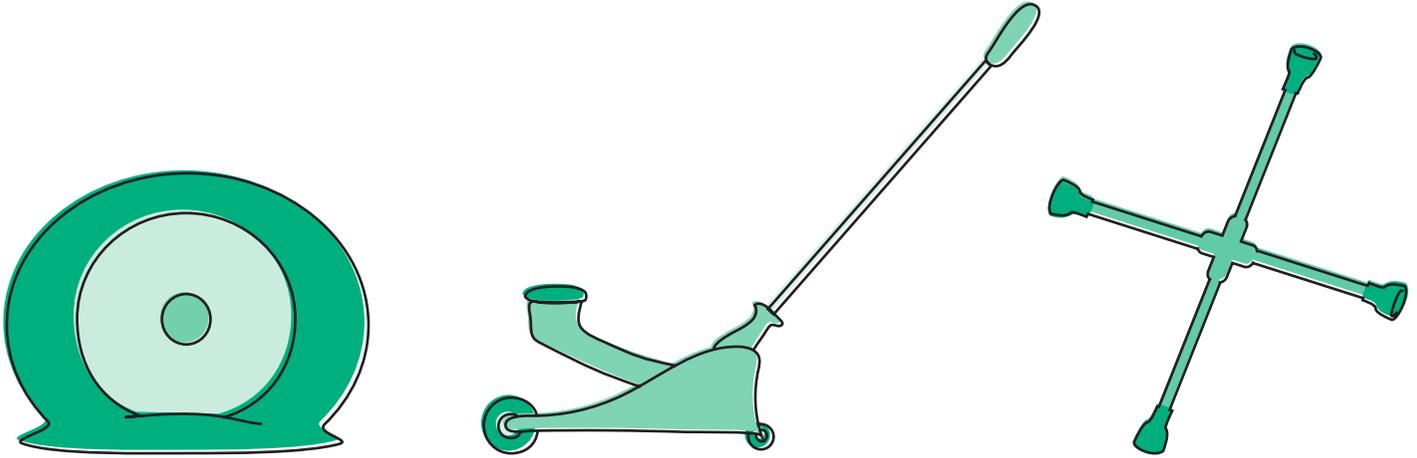
After 122 years of separation, the old Northern and Southern churches are reunited at a joint General Assembly in Atlanta, Georgia. After long ago denouncing slavery, the churches finally resolve other differences and come together as the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

History Moves On

Our Presbyterian history is full of twists and turns, reminding us that we stand on the shoulders of faithful people who have done amazing things in the name of Jesus Christ and the Presbyterian Church. But it's not just *their* work. It's also *your* work.

Option 1: Repair Kit

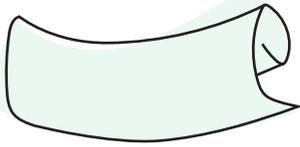
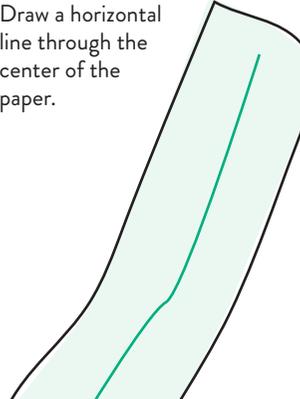
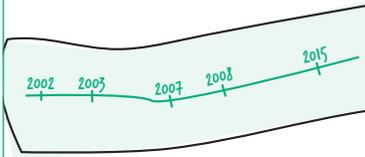
There will always be things in the church that need fixing. As part of a faith community, you can either sit around and wait for someone to fix them or get busy and help! On the flat tire, write a problem in your church or community that you'd like to see fixed. On the jack, write out the names of people who might help make this change happen. On the lug wrench, write some of the skills or passions or gifts you can offer to help solve this problem.



Option 2: Faith Journey Timeline

Supplies: butcher paper, markers, tape, stapler

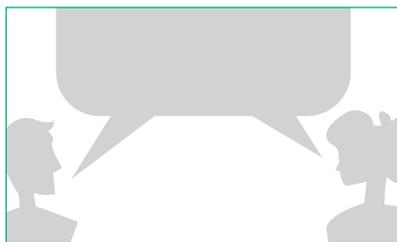
Using the personal timelines from the first page for reference, make a timeline for the entire group. This one will trace not only the important events in your life, but also the important events in the lives of your classmates.

<p>1. Get a long sheet of butcher paper—between 5 and 10 feet long, depending on the size of your group.</p> 	<p>2. Draw a horizontal line through the center of the paper.</p> 	<p>3. Starting with the year the oldest person in your group was born, add birthdays, baptism dates, and other important faith-related dates from the lives of the people in your group. Don't forget to include the date of Confirmation!</p> 	<p>4. Finish up by having everyone in the group add a faith goal for the future to the timeline.</p> <p>Hang this timeline somewhere in your church where everyone can see it.</p> 
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1. Think



2. Share



3. Discuss



What do you hope future generations will say about today's church?

