

## How has the Presbytery hurt your congregation?

1. Although this congregation has a strong core of lay leaders, when they have been without pastoral leadership, some have felt that the Presbytery could have done more to support them during the transitional period. Having said that, I am unsure what specific measures the Presbytery might have provided to assist them.
2. By being unavailable when we were searching for a transitional pastor. This process took months and should not have.
3. By not fully recognizing lay pastors. To me, it appears they are not given the respect and support by the Presbytery that pastors who have been to seminary receive. I think the life experiences lay pastors have had in the "real world" bring a fresh approach to understanding the needs of a congregation and a "down to earth" understanding of the gospel. I guess I'm not impressed if a pastor can read a Greek.
4. By sucking up money and providing nothing in return.
5. Cutting funding for CROSS Outreach, OSP, and First Arabic. I feel hurt that some churches in our Presbytery don't support these joint ministries.
6. Disregard for local needs
7. "I believe that Presbytery spends more focus on supporting pastors than it does on supporting local churches. I do not like the mandates that come from the Presbytery, particularly around health insurance. The local church should be able to shop for the best health insurance package for its needs instead of being required to use an overpriced Presbytery dictated plan.
8. I disagree with the practice of Presbytery using the sale of church property to balance its own budget. If the Presbytery's labor costs and overhead and other expenses total more than its income, Presbytery should cut its expenses. Not use the sale proceeds from closed churches to balance its own budget. It is a death spiral."
9. I would not want to list "hurts." This should be a positive survey.
10. Lack of concrete support in difficult times
11. Leaving the Des Moines location.
12. Much focus on urban and suburban churches while little focus on rural churches.
13. No help from Presbytery
14. No longer supporting CROSS Outreach
15. Not showing what they do.
16. Not sure what Presbytery has done in recent years. Did not assist when we were struggling and eventually closed. Efforts went to another newly relocated church in a more affluent part of town
17. "Our local church is trying to survive too. There are so many needs.... locally, presbytery, nationally.
18. Less members are doing more. It's tough on all.
19. Per capita keeps going up but the only impact we see is our money leaving.
20. Perceived distance
21. Possibly could facilitate activities/ministries to be shared with neighboring congregations
22. Presbytery (I think) helped the session after the former pastor left.
23. The presbytery has unrealistic expectations about larger churches funding smaller churches.
24. Pulls the pastor away for committee work that seems unnecessary or at least excessive.
25. requiring per capita payments
26. Seems to slow our search for a new minister.
27. To most about our finances. Asking inappropriate questions about what our women's club does. As in, "How much money do you make?" To the presbytery it's all about money.
28. Until the present Executive Pastors, the Presbytery had previous EPs who were unethical or incompetent. The Presbytery's financial decision-making has been unrealistic and has hurt its future.
29. We are on the fringe of Des Moines Presbytery (way south and east) and feel disconnected.
30. We get no help from Presbytery on issues in the church.

31. "With no pastor and having to schedule a pastor week after week it is hard. We now have an awesome moderator who actually cares, but I honestly feel Presbytery could have helped us more in prior years but did not.
32. This is a small community. People that already go to Church will probably stay at that Church, and those that do not attend Church, probably are not going to start. Very few people move in to the community.
33. I am not happy with Presbytery. I would be for our Church to break away from presbytery and start new.
34. I honestly feel that the Presbytery is waiting for our doors to close so they can step in and take our money. I am against giving this money to the Presbytery.
35. I understand a budget and look ahead each year to see where the budget is at, but I totally am turned off when Presbytery wants to know my Church's financial situation. If my Church would have to close, I would strongly suggest giving our money to different charities, rather than to Presbytery.
36. I am a faithful Church member who donates time and energy in our Church. I care about our Church greatly, but not so much about the Presbytery and the job they do."