Annual Statistical Report - Overview and FAQ

DUE DATE - <u>The final date for submission of 2024 annual reports is February 14, 2025</u>. Because you may need to gather information from various sources, such as your membership secretary, treasurer, and perhaps financial secretary, we encourage you not to wait until the last minute. If you have questions, please contact **Nate or Larry at support@susumc.org or 717.766.7054**.

LOGGING IN TO CONFERENCE STATISTICS

Open your web browser and go to https://stats.gcfa.org
(Ignore any old pastor or church email information…GCFA is working on updating the data)

Your username is your 6-digit General Conference Number (also known as the GCFA ID or GCNO) and can be found on the **Statistical Page** of the Conference website: https://susumc.org/stats

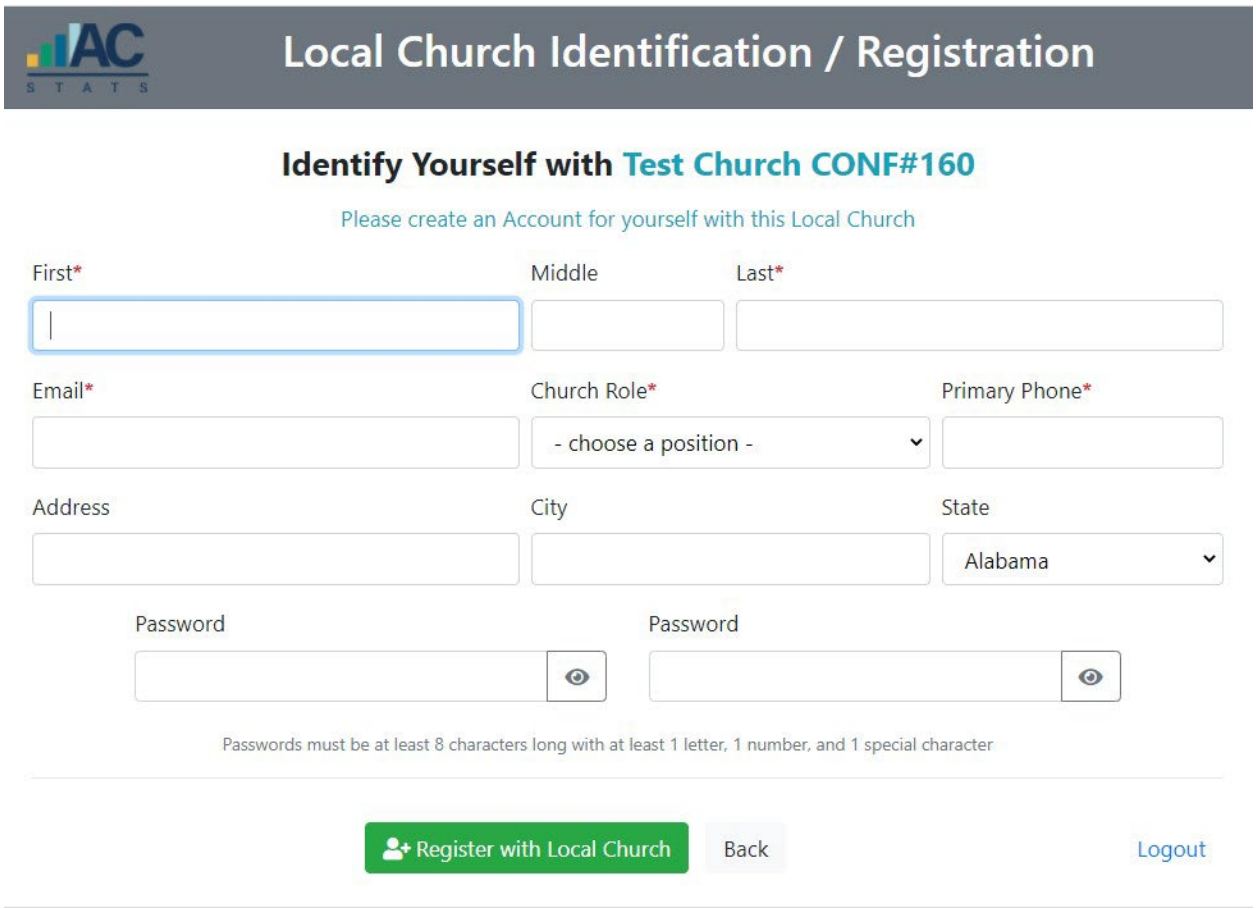
The universal password is **stats24$**

Daycare/Preschool Expenses

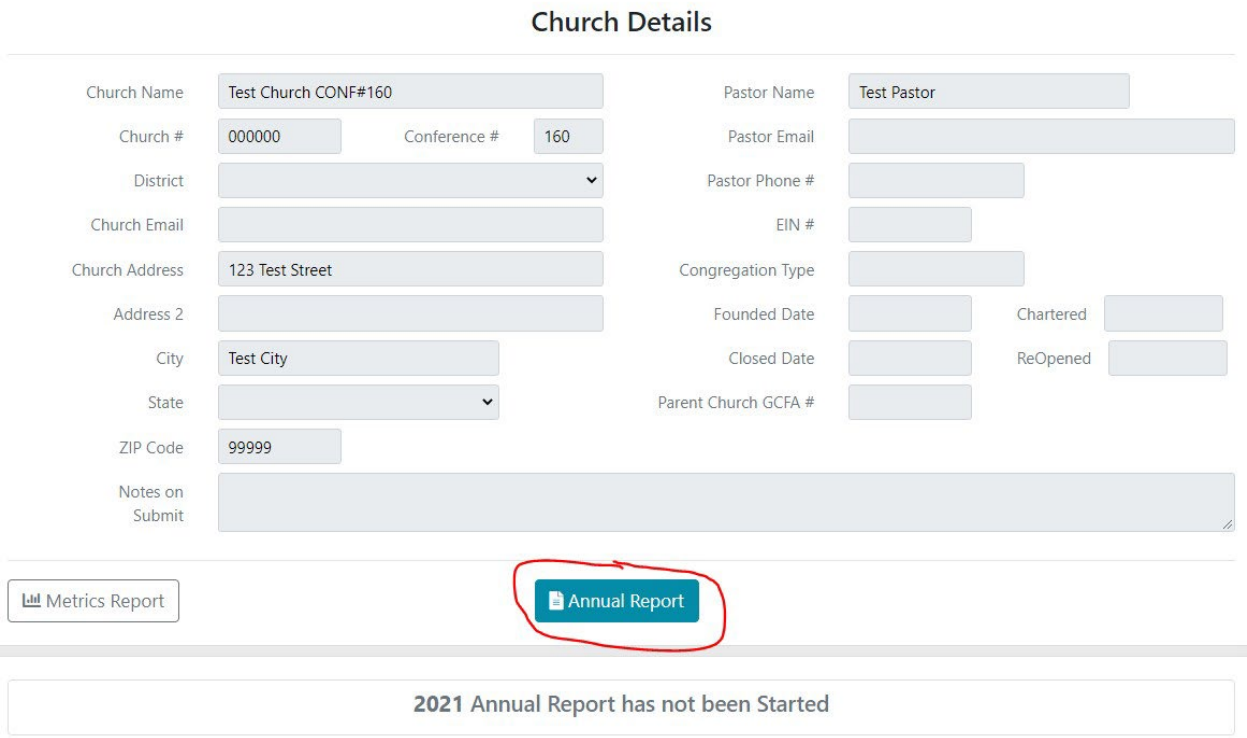
We want to make you aware of a significant Annual Statistics change for our AC in what we report to General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA). Effective with the 2023 data submission we are no longer going to include any church owned Daycare/Preschool expenses in ANY of the data we submit. The reason for this change is simple, other annual conferences do not include this data and we have paid more in general church apportionments because we have included these costs. However, we still need the daycare information and will collect it. **Again, there should be no costs associated with Daycare/Preschools in any of line items in the data submitted to GCFA**. Instead, use the form located at https://church.susumc.org

(Below) The first time you log in you will see a list of users for your church. If your name doesn't appear, select "I'm not Listed."

You will be shown a screen where you register your identity and create your own private password. Choose and enter your password and enter it a second time for verification.



Then select Register with Local Church and you will see a screen with your local church details. Select Annual Report.



ENTERING YOUR STATISTICS

Once you have collected all information from your general ledger and your membership rolls, it's time to enter your data. You can enter information in any order, and you can take a break and come back to it later. It will be automatically saved. All three Tables are on one page. You can scroll up and down among them or you can jump from one Table to another using the 123 tabs in the center.

Please read the brief notes in the Instructions tab before proceeding. Use the Display Question Help toggle switch if you would like to see extra help information on each line as you work.

NOTES FOR TABLE 1

Line 1 is prefilled for you, using the previous year's Line 4 figure.

As you proceed through the fields, if any field has no value, enter a zero. Do not simply leave it blank. When you tab through the lines, they will automatically add, subtract, and total where applicable.

Lines 4, 5, and 6 are three different ways of counting the same set of persons. These three lines must be equal.

Line 7a contains your figure for average virtual worship attendance.

Line 10 is the number of your constituents. Constituents are persons who are not members but nonetheless receive congregational and pastoral care. For more information refer to the Book of Discipline Paragraph 230.3.

NOTES FOR TABLE 2

Line 24 refers to market value of your property, NOT replacement (insurance) value. Although an appraisal is not needed, please show here the estimated real estate value.

Lines 37 and 38 – Line 37 is for direct giving to United Methodist affiliated agencies or organizations, such as Red Bird Mission, United Methodist Camping, Chelsea Retirement Community, United Methodist Community House, etc. Line 38 is for recipients not part of the Connection, such as a local food bank, a neighborhood school, a women's shelter, or a GoFundMe cause.

NOTES FOR TABLE 3

Table 3 is for all sources of income. Note that there is a section for income designated for the Budget/Spending Plan (Line 52,) and a separate section for income toward Capital and other designated projects (Line 53.) Line 54 is for Other funding sources.

ERRORS AND WARNINGS

When you have finished data entry and click Validate and Submit, you will be notified if there are errors that need to be corrected first.

Errors must be resolved before your Tables can be submitted. However, you are allowed to save your Tables *with* errors and return to them to fix them once you have found the correct information.

You will want to print a copy of your submission for your own records. Please do not also mail a paper copy to the Treasurer's office.* We will see your submission electronically.

Once you have submitted your Tables, you will not be able to make further changes yourself. If you find corrections to be made and wish to update your entries before deadline, please contact **Nate or Larry at support@susumc.org or 717.766.7054.**

Frequently Asked Questions

General

Q. How do I log in to complete my Tables?
A. Go to https://stats.gcfa.org. Your username is your 6-digit GCFAID, or GCNO. Each chartered church has one. Find it https://susumc.org/stats/. The universal password is ***stats23$***

Q. What is GCFA?
A. The General Council on Finance and Administration, the denominational agency that oversees the financial structure and integrity of the United Methodist Church. The website, https://stats.gcfa.org belongs to GCFA, not to the Susquehanna Conference.

Q. We have several people contributing answers to the report. How should we handle this?A. One or more blank copies of the Tables can be downloaded and shared among those assigned so that they can work on their sections simultaneously. Then one of the persons allowed to access the site can fill in the fields and submit.

Q. I am my church's treasurer, logging in for the first time. I am asked to select my name, but it isn't there.
A. Click on I'm Not Listed and you will be able to fill in your name and contact details. That will give you access the next time you log in.

Q. Our church has several satellite campus locations. Do the satellites report?
A. Not directly. The parent church collects the data from its campus locations and submits one set of Tables that includes all locations, under the name of the parent church.

Q: What if my church is part of a multi-point charge, a circuit, or a parish?
A: Each church must submit its own report, regardless of alignment with other congregations. The exception is satellite churches (see preceding question.)

Q. Our church is planning to close or disaffiliate next year. Do we have to report?
A. Yes. Your church is still active, and the Tables must be completed for 2023.

Q: What if a particular line does not apply to our church and there is no answer? Simply enter a zero. No fields should be left blank.

Q. I don't understand what a particular line is asking for.
A. Click on the blue-linked line number to see further explanation on the question. You may also toggle on all line explanations at once by selecting Display Question Help at top left of Table 1.

Table 1 – Membership

Q. Why can't we change the figure on Line 1?
A. Line 1 is not editable, because it records the ending membership from the previous year. To adjust this figure, use Line 2d for addition, or 3c for subtraction, to make any corrections. The new total for the current report will then appear on Line 4.

Q. Should we count the pastor as a member?
A. Ordained elders and deacons, as well as actively servingLocal Pastors, are members of the Annual Conference, not the local church. Therefore, do not count them in membership. Certified Lay Ministers, District Superintendent-Assigned pastors (DSAs,) Diaconal Ministers, and Retired Local Pastors may or may not be members of your church.

Q. Why do I keep getting errors on Lines 4, 5, and 6?
A. Those three lines must each contain the same value. They are simply three different ways of counting the same pool of members; first by professing members (Line 4,), then that same number of members sorted by gender (Line 5,) and then by ethnicity (Line 6.)

Q. What is a constituent?
A. A Constituent is a person who is not a member but is closely associated with your congregation. It may be a member's relative who attends regularly, or perhaps the mom who brings her teenagers to youth group and volunteers in the office. Anyone you consider part of your church family and would provide pastoral and congregational services for is your constituent.

Q. Can we use the membership numbers from our Church Conference report?
A. Yes, this is a good source of data for Table 1. But remember to add any members who joined after your Church Conference, so that the total membership is accurate as of the end of the year. New members also will also need to be accounted for in Lines 5 and 6, by gender and ethnicity.

Also, please remember that your church or charge conference membership report may contain information for only part of the year. The statistical report requires membership and average worship attendance numbers from January through December.

Q. What are some guidelines for counting average worship attendance?
A. Count everyone, including children, attending your primary worship service(s.) Do not count persons in the building who are not there to worship. If a person attends multiple worship services on one day, count that person only once. Special services held at other than primary

worship times, such as Christmas Eve and Good Friday, should not be figured into the average worship attendance. (Do not count online worshippers. That average goes on Line 7a.)

Q. How do we count online worshippers?
A. Report the average weekly number of listeners who live stream, download audio or video, and listen to podcasts. Generic visits to your website are not counted as worship.

Table 2 – Assets and Expenses

Q. For Line 24, Market Value, do we have to secure an appraisal?
A: Although an appraisal may be the most accurate determination of market value, it is not required. Because it can be difficult to determine the market value of a church, which is property tax-exempt, you may use the value in your insurance policy IF the replacement value is at 100%. If, however, your insurance policy covers actual cash value, which is replacement value minus depreciation, you might want to ask a real estate broker to estimate a market value on your church property.

Q. Our 2-point charge shares ownership of a parsonage. How do we report this on Line 24?
A. If property is held by a multi-church charge in common (rather than by an individual church) a share of the value should be assigned to each church according to its percentage of total professing membership within the charge unless a specific percentage of commonly held property has been otherwise designated.

Q: How should we report pass-through income?
A: Be sure that it truly is pass-through. If your church is the collection point for a charity, for example, where the church does not deposit the money given, but simply passes it on to the charity, that is true pass-through and does not have to be reported. However, if you collect cash and checks, deposit them, and then write a check from your bank account to the charity, those transactions have gone on your books and therefore it is not pass-through income. The income needs to be reported on Line 53d. The expense should be recorded on Line 37 or 38, as appropriate.

Q. We pay our pastor extra in the form of an IRA. Should this be included in Pensions Paid (Line 39?)
A. No. This would be considered part of the pastor's compensation package and its value would be added to Line 41c.

Q. Where do I report honoraria paid for lay speakers and other guest speakers?
A. On Line 47- Operating Expense.

Q. We are part of a multi-point charge. We pay our part of the benefit ministry shares to the other church and they send it in. How should we report this?

A. Regardless of who remits the total amount to the Conference, each church should report the amount it pays. This is the same for any shared expense. Every chartered church with a General Church Number (GCNO) must log in individually and submit the statistical report, even if it belongs to a multi-point charge or circuit.

Q. What is the difference between Line 43 and Line 44?
A. Line 43 refers to reimbursements, which are paid to the pastor on individual, receipted transactions. Line 44 refers to a lump-sum cash allowance from which a pastor spends as needed. Most churches will use one line or the other, depending on the compensation agreement.

Q. We held a fundraiser for the elementary school in our neighborhood. Should this go on Line 52g?
A. No. The proceeds were not used for the church's budget, so the gift to the school should go on Line 38.

Q. What is the difference between program and operating expenses?
A. This refers to Lines 46 and 47. Program expense goes toward the ministries of your church – for example, Sunday School curriculum; altar decorations; sheet music; portable sign rental for an event. Operating expense goes toward the day-to-day functioning of the church – for example, utilities; maintenance; lawn mowing and snow removal services; office supplies, insurance. Every church has these two types of expenses. These lines should not be left blank.

Table 3 – Income

Q. How do we determine number of households giving to the church (Line 51?)

A. This is giving that identifies the giver and can be recorded. A household, or giving unit, is an individual, a couple, or a family that gives as one. For example, a married couple may give jointly; that would be one household or one giving unit. Another couple might give individually, from their own separate funds. The latter example would count as two households, or two giving units. If your church uses offering envelopes, each envelope number is a giving unit.

Q. What is an "unidentified giver" (Line 52c?)
A. This would be a person who gives cash without identification to the offering. The gift cannot be tracked or credited to the giver.

Q. Our church was given a 15-passenger van as a gift. Should we report this as income?
A. Only if you sold the van and converted it to cash. Or if you rent the van to supplement the budget, report the rental income on Line 52f. Be sure to figure the van's value into your capital assets on Line 24. In-kind contributions are not considered income for purposes of this report.

Q. Please explain the differences in Line 53b.
A. A memorial is a gift in honor of a deceased person. An endowment is a fund to which donations are made, to be invested. A bequest is a gift made through a will.

Q. What is the difference between Line 52g, received through fundraisers and other sources; and Line 53c, funds from other sources and projects?
A. 52g refers to money raised for the yearly budget/spending plan; 53c refers to money raised for capital projects and other planned expenditures beyond the yearly budget.

Q. Our church received a grant from a community agency. Where should this be reported?
A. On Line 54c of Table 3.

Thank you for this very important work, as together we build our Susquehanna Conference Connection!