

PURPOSE / MANDATE

The Committee functions under, and reports directly to, the General Assembly. Each year a report detailing the activities of the Committee is submitted to Assembly and is published in the Acts & Proceedings (A. & P.) The Committee has reported to Assembly continuously since 1917. A small budget - usually in the \$5000 to \$6000 range - is provided to assist the Committee in its work. The Committee's mandate is to raise awareness of, and interest in, the history of our Church by whatever means are deemed to be appropriate. The Committee acts as a resource to other committees and bodies within the Church on historical matters. One recent request had to do with whether or not The Presbyterian Church in Canada should have its own flag. This matter was referred to us by Assembly. Our response, with reasons, was no. Another request had to do with the issue of re-writing the Westminster Confession of Faith. This request for an opinion came to us from the Church Doctrine Committee. The opinion of our Committee is that this is an historic document, drafted at a time when there was a real danger that the Papacy would be restored in England and Scotland, and should be left intact. We decided that comments regarding the perceived objectionable language could be addressed by an interpretation of the document, in light of current thinking. This was done by the Committee on Articles of Faith in 1966 and set forth on pages 267 and 268 of the A. & P. of the 92nd General Assembly.

The Committee has always actively encouraged congregations to properly care for their records and to ensure their preservation by having them microfilmed. Further information on microfilming can be obtained from the Church Archives.

The Committee works diligently to engender an interest in, and awareness of, our Church's long and glorious history. We do this by encouraging the celebration of significant anniversaries or other prominent occasions in congregations. From time-to-time various members of the Committee have written articles on historical matters in the Presbyterian Record.

The Committee on History is available to assist congregations and others on anything to do with the history of our Church.

The Committee firmly believes in the importance of preserving Presbyterian history right across the country. We know, as well, that preservation of church records is a legal requirement of our denomination. Our history is alive in the buildings in which we worship, in the beauty of our stained glass windows, in our books, records and other artifacts. Preserving them is another way in which we Presbyterians can be good stewards, standing behind our faith ready to pass all of these things on to the generations who will follow us.