

## Presbyopoly: Game Review



Maybe you have memories of a well intentioned Sunday school teacher enthusiastically leading you through homemade jeopardy as the room echoed with “God spoke through what?” for 500 please,” or maybe you were that jovial leader just last week. While serving as a youth director, I was constantly looking for new and engaging ways to impart young people with an impassioned knowledge of our tradition and the three B’s – the Bible, the *Book of Order*, the *Book of Confessions* – along with all the other things Presbyterians love. Fueled by this same desire, a confirmation class at St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church of Tulsa, OK came up with Presbyopoly in March 2012. So does it outdo my SmartBoard Jeopardy and recycled Halloween candy prizes? As long as we have a motion and a second, let’s open this for debate.

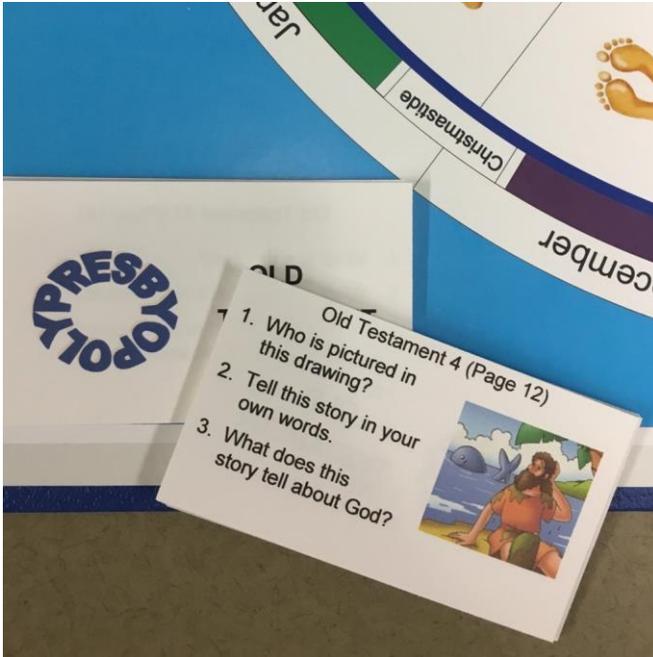
The objective of Presbyopoly is not to win but to shift from “the world’s’ rules” to “walking in Jesus’ shoes” so players might work together to “be involved in the mission God is doing among us and around us” (quoting from the Presbyopoly *Game Book*). As the game begins, players take turns rolling the die and moving forward the appropriate number and then using the spinner to discover if they have a question to answer, if it is Pay Day, or if it’s time to Tithe. Each question card has three questions and players can ask their fellow players for help; for each question correct that player moves forward one space. Once players have reached the center of the Labyrinth, they put on their Jesus sandals and the game shifts from being played by “the world’s’ rules” to being a team effort with the shared objective to all reach the Table, count their collective money in the Tithe section, place 10% of that in the Mission section, and then discern what Christ might have them do with that money to best serve their neighbors.



We test drove the Premier Edition which comes with fairly traditional pieces – a game board with a labyrinth placed inside of the liturgical calendar, play money, a single

die, a spinner, four plastic people (yellow, red, black, white), four pairs of “Jesus’ sandals,” and four sets of question cards (Old Testament, New Testament, Sacraments and Beliefs, and Seasons and Symbols). Included in the box are also three expansion packs (Gospel, Book of Order, and Church History) and some brochures for various ministries in Tulsa and beyond. You may notice we had five players and only four game pieces so we ended up using a chapstick tube for our fifth person but the booklet advises having one person serve as the treasurer who also checks player’s answers in the *Game Book*.

Playing alongside four other seminarians at Louisville Presbyterian Theological



Seminary in our campus gathering area, The Winn Center, we drew a lot of envious eyes as we were laughing at ourselves the whole time. Starting out, we had a tough time orienting ourselves to the Christ-like objectives of the game and it took us some reflecting to understand why there wouldn’t be a winner; seminarians struggling with grace – could we be more stereotypical? We also moved a little quickly past the opening pages of the *Game Book* skipping some of the theological meat that would have helped us make sense of the Tithing and Offerings components as well as the teamwork. To get the most out of it, be sure to read the *Game Book*

together and reflect upon what it means to be moving toward the Table as one team before anyone rolls a die. Overall, we found the questions in this game surprisingly difficult for a group of seminarians numbering amongst ourselves three cradle Presbyterians, one later in life PC(USA) convert, and one player from the United Church of Christ. We all agreed, as we cleaned up and closed the box, that this game would be just as helpful for adults as youth and contemplated using it to study for our Ordination Exams.

Presbyopoly is certainly worth giving a try at your next nerdy church gathering, Officer training, or youth event. Bonus: you can skip making your own Jeopardy slides and no one will stop you from rewarding folks with leftover candy all the same. Want to order? Email [presbyopoly@standrewstulsa.org](mailto:presbyopoly@standrewstulsa.org).