



August 12, 2015

Dear PCBW Congregation,

As many of you know, our Session has spent the past year meeting weekly in a prayerful process of discernment regarding our church's affiliation with the Presbyterian Church (USA). This discernment process was initiated by members of our congregation who expressed to the session concern that some of the recent rulings, decisions and actions of the General Assembly are no longer reflective of the beliefs and mission statement of PCBW. In response (and in addition to the Session's meetings), a task force of congregational members was formed to research and gather information concerning the positions of the PCUSA and other possible denominational options so that we might have real information on which to prayerfully consider our future.

While we recognized as we studied and prayed that as a congregation we might not be completely unified in our perspectives, our prayer has been that this process would not divide us as a church family, but that Christ might give us patience, grace, and love for one another, so that we might truly discern His desire for our congregation.

With this in mind, our discernment process has led the Session to make the nearly-unanimous recommendation that we explore with the congregation the possibility of changing our affiliation from the PCUSA to the Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians (ECO).

While the Session will be expanding on our reasoning, in broad strokes we make this recommendation because we believe (based on our church's recently completed Mission Study) that ECO is a better match for our church both theologically and missionally. For while we are appreciative of our PCUSA heritage, we are concerned by what we see as theological drift within the PCUSA, as well as by increasing conflict (some of it severe) between those of different theological perspective within the denomination.

While this is the Session's recommendation, it is important to note that we recognize that in the end, this is a congregational decision. Because of this, our commitment as a Session is to lead the congregation through a discernment process we hope will help the congregation decide for itself what following the will of Christ means for PCBW. This process will involve:

1. Making all task force materials available to the congregation, as well as other information that might be helpful, in order that the congregation might have the same information considered by the Session.
2. Two identical "Town Hall" meetings in which the Session will outline its perspective and congregational members can ask questions and offer their own perspectives. Thursday, September 24 (7:00-8:30 PM) and Sunday, September 27 (12:15-1:45 PM)
3. A Denominational Information Night, where representatives of both the PCUSA and ECO will be here to give presentations and answer questions. Date/Time TBD.
4. Straw poll vote (non-binding) to help gauge the perspective of the congregation. If the poll shows the church supports the possibility of the church moving to ECO we would then move forward with the steps necessary for a formal vote for dismissal, including interacting with the Presbytery of Kendall about possible dismissal terms.

We urge you to be in prayer with us about this process - that God might not only help us discern His desires, but draw us closer as a congregation through it. As always, if you have any questions about the Session's recommendation or the described process, please don't hesitate to talk with one of us or with our pastor, Mark.

In Christ,

The Session