

Why join the Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians? (ECO)

Some churches who are seeking dismissal from the PC(USA) are being received into ECO. Here are some of the stated reasons for joining ECO:

1. Its theological convictions and behavioral expectations are clearly stated and we are firmly in agreement with them. All church officers must agree to accept, adopt and be bounded by these essentials.
2. This is the most entrepreneurial and missional option available to us.
3. The government is much more flexible and more focused on encouraging missional initiatives. For example, the definition of what constitutes a church includes small groups, home churches, satellite churches, etc. Lay pastors may lead churches. Elder terms may be determined at the local level.
4. There is a strong expectation that churches will form covenant relationships with other churches.
5. It removes the church from the PC(USA) controversies, while allowing the church to have strong missional and fellowship relationships with likeminded congregations remaining in the PC(USA). Joining the Fellowship Community does not accomplish the former and membership in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church does not encourage the latter.
6. It clearly affirms the role of women in ministry and positions of ordained leadership.
7. It is growing rapidly.
8. It provides a fresh start.
9. It makes no claim on property.

Why not join the Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians?

Some churches seeking dismissal from the PC(USA) are not choosing ECO. Here are some of their stated reasons:

1. It is so new and small in comparison to the PC(USA) it may not be a stable organization. It has not been tested by time or controversy.
2. Because of its newness and small size it lacks the resources of a larger denomination.
3. Should not join if mission is not a primary intent and focus of church leadership.
4. Should not join if your church does not wish to participate in covenant relationships with like minded churches.
5. Benefits plans may not yet be stable.
6. The financial cost associated with leaving the PC(USA) may be substantial.