

Why stay in the PC(USA)?

Many churches and their leaders that would fall into the category of *conservative and evangelical* are choosing to stay in the PC(USA). Here are some of their stated reasons for staying:

We highly value our relationships and interactions with other churches in the denomination. Our respective pastors and staff have long standing relationships that are encouraging and beneficial to our churches.

We believe unity is important to our Lord. Schism is not a Biblical option.

Nothing the denomination has done prevents our congregation from living under the authority of scripture and pursuing our mission as we understand them.

We feel called to stay, to move toward the problems not away from them.

The denomination has a great heritage and has been highly regarded for its mission emphasis and programs.

The church is firmly rooted in reformed theology as evidenced by the Book of Order and the Book of Confessions which faithfully present our theology.

The size of the denomination relative to other options gives it the capacity to have a far greater impact for mission.

Strong pension program for pastors. Pension and insurance program is available for employees.

There are now more evangelicals employed at headquarters than at any time since the 1920s.

We strongly support the denomination's initiative to start 1001 churches in the next decade. PCBW through our connection with Presbytery of Kendall and the PC(USA) directly supported the New Church Development in Driggs, ID over these last 6 years.

We are comfortable being in community with those with whom we disagree.

The time, effort and resources required to leave will distract us from pursuing our mission.

Maintaining unity and fulfilling our vows trumps our conscience at this time.

The denomination may die but I want to be part of its rebirth.

Why Seek Dismissal from the PC(USA)?

Many churches and their leaders that would fall into the category of *conservative and evangelical* are choosing to seek dismissal from the PC (USA). Here are some of their stated reasons for leaving:

There is a long term (decades) trend that is moving farther and farther away from our core reformed theology. Most importantly, the authority of scripture and salvation through Christ are being called into question. *Pluralism, universalism* and *cultural accommodation* are increasingly evident.

This departure, by some, from our historical understanding of scripture and salvation, has led the denomination into increasing levels of controversy which seem to be intractable.

The recent GA decisions in regard to ordination and marriage are prime evidence of what happens when the authority of scripture is replaced with cultural accommodation.

The evangelical resistance has been weakened - With increasing numbers of evangelical pastors and congregations leaving the denomination, there is a greater likelihood of seeing General Assembly actions and pronouncements of a theological liberal persuasion and less likelihood that presbyteries will vote down liberal overtures that are sent to them for approval.

All the controversy wastes time and resources and takes away from the mission of the church.

The battles are sucking the life out of the church.

We feel that our witness at the local level has been compromised.

While calling people/churches to remain in the denomination for the purpose of the peace and unity of the church, PC(USA) has compromised the church's purity, whereas all three pursuits are equally emphasized in our ordination vows. Purity, reflected in obedience to God's Word, has been de-emphasized through actions of polity resulting in the disputed changes in the Book of Order, ordination standards and the definition of marriage. There can be no peace and unity where there is no purity.

This is a matter of conscience for us. We must take a stand.

The denomination has been in decline for decades, is irrelevant to our culture and may soon collapse.

The controversy and the denomination's stance on church property are discouraging giving.

Acquire clear title to our church property free of PSUSA trust clause.

There is evidence that the denomination has influenced the gracious dismissal policies adopted by many presbyteries making it more difficult and costly to leave with property in the future.

Same sex marriage has now been declared legal in Idaho and marriages are now being performed. At any time now, should a same sex couple present themselves to our Pastor for marriage, there is a distinct possibility the church will be damaged no matter which way the Pastor and Session chooses - i.e. irreparably in the community (particularly this community) if he declines, and a potential major schism in the Church if he assents. There is no longer a legal or denominational "cover".