

MHPC Denominational Meeting

Presented

November 18 & December 2



Recommendation

Session has voted to recommend:

- We disaffiliate with PC(USA)
- Seek a new affiliation with an alternate reformed faith

Why?



Lack of essential tenets of faith has allowed denominational drift on *key* issues:

- Authority of Scripture: “Not *the* word of God, capital W, but a reference point”.
- Theological Drift: “Jesus is *one* path to God. One of many.”
- Ethical Compromise: Recent changes to ordination standards symptomatic of secular not Biblical values—fidelity in marriage between a man and a woman or chastity in singleness.
- Denominational Direction: Increasing feeling that the historic Biblical beliefs have gone from main stream, to minority, to tolerated, to repudiated, to...?



Presbyterian Churches

The Task Force is continuing to evaluate alternate Presbyterian denominations:

- EPC—The Evangelical Presbyterian Church
- ECO—Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians
- Both options have very attractive attributes including:
 - Documented Essential Tenets of Faith consistent with the Gospel and our beliefs
 - Ability to associate with like-minded growing churches!
 - Strong missional spirit





Benefits

Conflict resolution:

- There is a tremendous amount of denominational effort and attention being wasted arguing and wrangling over our beliefs.
- This is wasted resources, time, energy and passion that is not helping either side of this debate advance the Gospel.
- Enables missional focus.
- Churches who have left PCUSA have commented on what a refreshing experience interacting with their new denominations.



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More area Presbyterian churches consider split from organization

March 05, 2012 6:32 PM

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MARIA ST. LOUIS-SANCHEZ

THE GAZETTE

A vote Sunday by the largest Presbyterian church in Colorado Springs to split from the denomination's main governing body in the United States may just be the beginning of a growing divide.

Eight churches in the region have expressed an interest in splitting from Presbyterian Church (USA), said Ronald Anderson, executive presbyter for the region that is based in Pueblo and spans much of

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THE GAZETTE FILE
First Presbyterian Church

... (U.S.A.) narrowly rejected, for now, a proposal to abandon the traditional definition of marriage on Friday, a year after it struck down a barrier to ordaining homosexuals.

Posted: July 9, 2012 at 7:01 PM

ever

on of same-sex marriage persuade





Benefits (continued)

- Existence of unambiguous essential tenets of faith that align with the historic interpretation of the Gospel
- Ability to fellowship with like-minded churches
- Strong missional spirit in the denomination will match and *enhance* our missions focus
- Ability to own our land and buildings



Complications

- PC(USA) owns our property in trust
 - MHPC has made significant investments over the years in our land and buildings, but we still need to negotiate their release
- Uncertainty of cost
 - Current Gracious Dismissal Policy would cost \$20-\$50k to exit.
 - Some pressure for higher cost basis (based on % of value)
- Uncertainty of PC(USA)'s willingness to release us to our chosen denomination



Process

- Education of congregation
- Non-binding vote of members
- Based on feedback, decision from Session to proceed with process or withdraw
- If we proceed, negotiation with SJ Presbytery on withdrawal terms (including some as yet unknown cost)
- Final presentation to congregation on settlement resolution
- Binding congregational vote
- If passed (75% or more) then forwarded to Presbytery for vote
- If approved begin process of dismissal to another reformed denomination (TBD)



Next Steps

- Two identical meetings 11/18 and 12/2 between services
- Open discussion and Q&A 12/9 (7:15-8:30PM)
- Non-binding vote December 9-16
 - Member and non-member votes will be tallied separately.
 - All ballots *must* have voter name and signature to be counted
- Session will deliberate once results of the non-binding vote are in and decide whether to proceed or not.
- If the congregation is overwhelmingly supportive of disaffiliation, we anticipate going to Presbytery and asking for dismissal.
- Any negotiated settlement reached between Session and the Presbytery would be voted on before being acted upon further.



Questions?