



PRESBYTERY OF NEW COVENANT

Growing congregations that passionately engage their community to make disciples.

Mike Cole
General Presbyter

Mary Marcotte
Associate General Presbyter

Lynn Hargrove
Stated & Recording Clerk

T. Stewart Coffman
General Presbyter Emeritus

CALL TO THE STATED MEETING

Our presbytery meeting on July 19 will be at Covenant, College Station. Registration will open at 8:30 am, with the meeting beginning at 9. Orientation for first time commissioners will be at 8:40.

Our General Assembly commissioners will be reporting on their experiences in Detroit, and sharing their impressions of serving on various committees and voting in plenary. We have included this in a regular stated meeting of the presbytery so that it is more convenient for people to attend.

We have four candidates that will be taking their last step prior to installation and ordination. We will be weaving their preaching throughout the day as we celebrate God's call on their lives. They are called to congregations large and small, and bring a diversity of gifts to their new ministries and to the presbytery.

Our friends at Grace Presbyterian Church voted recently to be dismissed to the Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians. Let us send them with our blessing, as we take action on their request.

There will be other business throughout the day. May we come together to celebrate the good and gracious work of the Presbytery of New Covenant!

In Christ,
Lynn Hargrove
Stated and Recording Clerk

All ministers and clerks should have received the invitation from the Session and congregation of Covenant Presbyterian Church to the Stated Meeting of the presbytery of Saturday, July 19, 2014. A map with directions to the church was included with that invitation. Clerks are asked to pass along all meeting materials to the elected commissioner(s) for this meeting. Registration will be done online. The link will be live by July 4. Those registering online will be sure to have a lunch ticket. Others will be available on a first come/ first serve basis, and we may be limited. Childcare reservations MUST be made directly to the church. Please honor all reservations made. Each commissioner is urged to check the presbytery website on Friday before Saturday's meeting for any additional meeting information.



COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

220 Rock Prairie Road • College Station, Texas 77845
(979) 694-7700 • Fax (979) 696-4334

TO: Minister-Members and Elder Commissioners to the Stated Meeting of
The Presbytery of New Covenant

The session, congregation and staff of Covenant Presbyterian Church are delighted to host the Stated Meeting of the Presbytery on Saturday, July 19. We have been preparing for the Presbytery meeting now for several weeks and are excited about hosting you! We hope you will find us a most friendly and loving church. We welcome you to the College Station/Bryan family.

Registration begins at 8:30 am. The registration table will be the first thing you see when entering the front door of the sanctuary. There is an orientation for new commissioners at 8:45 am in Room 100. A map with directions to the church is attached to this invitation.

Reservations are necessary for those requesting childcare. Childcare will be provided for children who are five years old or younger. Childcare cannot be provided for children who are sick or require special care. Parents must provide a sack lunch, snacks, diapers, bottles, etc. Parents should pick up their children promptly after the Presbytery meeting. Please call the church office (979-694-7700) ***no later than one week prior to the meeting*** to indicate number and age of child/children for whom you are making reservations.

Reservations for lunch are not required. Lunch tickets will be made available on a "first come; first served" basis. The cost for lunch is \$7.00 per person and a lunch ticket table will be set up near the registration table.

A floor plan of the church will be included with the Presbytery Packet or Addendum.

Those needing overnight accommodations may contact the Courtyard Marriot near the Covenant Presbyterian Church. Carrie Walker has made a block of rooms available on a first come basis at a special rate of \$99.00 plus tax, etc. per night. You should ask for the New Covenant Presbytery block of rooms by calling the hotel at 979-695-8111 or 866-925-1043. The Courtyard Marriot is located at 3939 Highway 6 S.

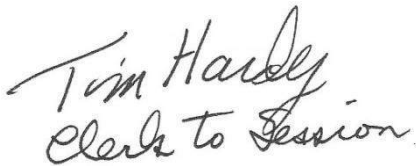
Parking is available on the west and south sides of the church. We will have parking attendants there starting at 8:00 am. If we have overflow there will be plenty of parking on the church grounds. The attendants will direct you to your parking place.

Please let Presbytery staff know of any equipment, meeting rooms, or display area needs. They will coordinate with us in making provisions. You must arrange for a display area ahead of time by completing a "Display Request" form (call Lynn Hargrove, 713/526-2585, ext. 210 or e-mail her at lhargrove@pbyofnewcovenant.org).

The Presbytery Packet for this meeting will be posted online two weeks prior to the meeting, and mailed to those churches and ministers without e-mail. It is the responsibility of each commissioner and minister to access this PACKET and bring it to the meeting.

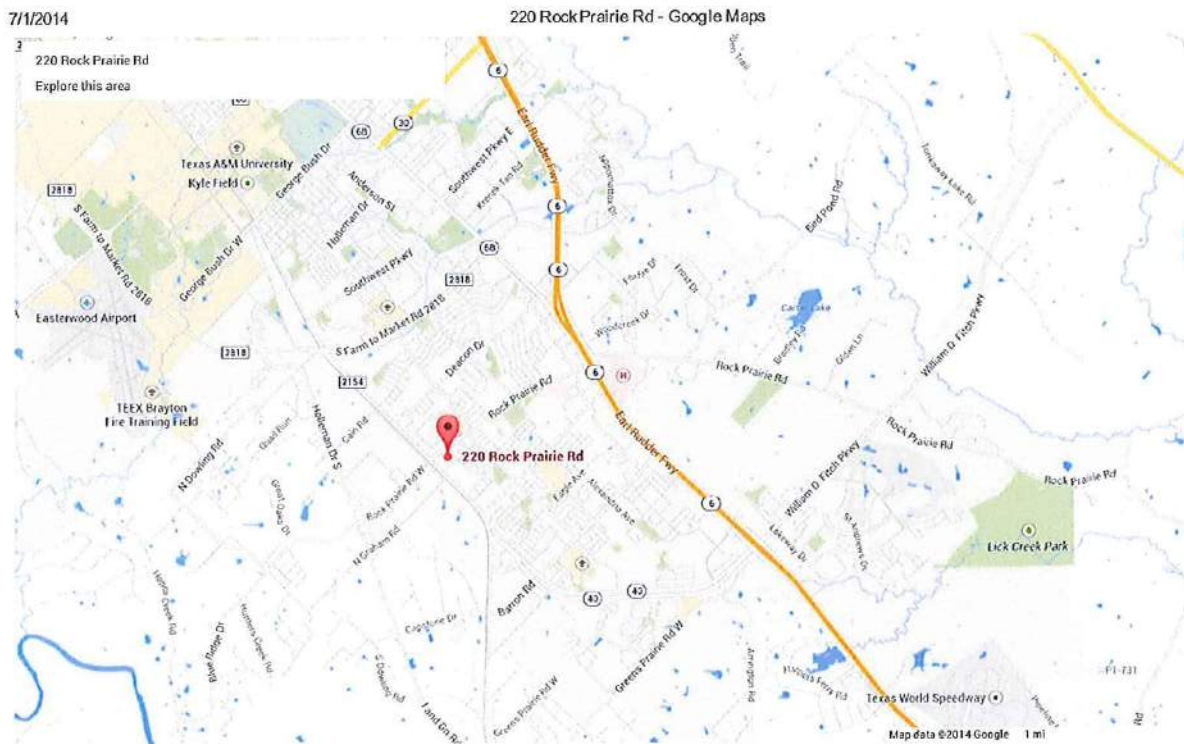
Again, we welcome your visit to our church and to our community!

The peace of Christ be with you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tim Hardy" on the first line and "Clerk to Session" on the second line.

Tim Hardy
Clerk of Session
Covenant Presbyterian Church

Map to Location



<https://www.google.com/maps/place/220+Rock+Prairie+Rd/@30.58121,-96.2608895,13z/data=!4m2!3m1!1s0x864684ba37a33f8b0:8b7d8d9348f61853>

1/1

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-------|
| Call to Meeting | 1-3 |
| Map to Covenant, College Station | 4 |
| Docket | 6-7 |
| Table of Motions/Omnibus (A) | 8 |
| Offering Recipient | 9 |
| Stated Clerk Report (B) Includes information of the dismissal of Houston, Grace | 10-21 |
| Administrative Division Steering Committee (C) - no report at this time | |
| Committee on Ministry (D) | 22-36 |
| Committee on Preparation for Ministry (E) – report will be in the addendum packet | |
| General Council (F) Includes Rationale for Revisions to the Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure, the proposed revisions and the current procedure | 37-83 |
| Ministries Division Steering Committee (G) | 84-85 |
| Evangelism & Church Growth (G.1) | 86 |
| Nominating Committee (H) – no report at this time | |
| For the Good of the Body (Informational Flyers) | 87-90 |

Postlude is the publication that highlights the events and business conducted at presbytery meetings. It will be posted on the presbytery's website: www.pbyofnewcovenant.org

Commissioners will receive an email notification when Postlude is available. Please share it with your sessions.

Comments and suggestion should be directed to Helen Wolf at hwolf@pbyofnewcovenant.org

Do you receive Tuesday Connect, our weekly email newsletter? Contact Patricia Brantley to subscribe: pbrantley@pbyofnewcovenant.org

The Presbytery of New Covenant

“Growing congregations that passionately engage their community to make disciples.”

Stated Meeting – July 19, 2014

Covenant Presbyterian Church, 220 Rock Prairie Road, College Station, TX 77845
979/694-7700

This year's theme – Making Disciples

Offering: Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services

8:30 Registration Opens Welcome Area

8:40 New Commissioner Orientation TBA

There will be a place available all day for prayer and meditation. Signs will direct you to this location.

For your information, TE means Teaching Elder, and RE means Ruling Elder.

THE DOCKET

Please silence all devices!

8:55 am **Gathering Song**

9:00 am **Opening Worship** Moderator, RE John Jo
Offering Recipient: New Scholarship/APTS

9:30 am **Opening Business** Moderator and Stated Clerk

- ✦ Declaration of Quorum and Adoption of the Docket
- ✦ Welcome by Host Church – RE ??? (no pastor at this time)
- ✦ Welcome of Others (First time Commissioners, Corresponding Members, New Minister Members, Visitors)
- ✦ Omnibus Motion (B.1)
- ✦ Moderator's Remarks and Appointments
 - Tellers:
 - Nominations to Nominating Committee

9:40 am Reports of the GA Commissioners RE Julie McLemore

11:10 am Report of the Stated Clerk (B) TE Lynn Hargrove
Administrative Commissions for Installations/Ordinations
Dismissal – Houston, Grace

11:30 am The WORD – Kathleen Davies

NOON Blessing before the meal/Instructions

12:15 pm **FELLOWSHIP AT TABLE/OPEN SPACE CONVERSATIONS**

1:00 pm **Reconvening Hymn**

1:05 pm The WORD – Brian Long

1:35 pm **Ministries Division**
Grant Recipients

RE Jody Harrington

Administrative Division

RE Jane Larkin

1:50 pm The WORD – Brandon Gaide

2:20 pm **Nominating Committee**

RE Gayle Smith

Report of General Council

TE Laurey Murphy

Proposed changes to the Reconciliation and Discernment Procedure
(First Reading)

Report on legal actions involving the presbytery

2:45 pm The WORD – Kristi Click

3:15 pm Committee on Ministry

TE John Hirling

1. Action Items

2. Board of Pensions – Kevin Keaton

Committee on Preparation for Ministry

TE Kevin Boyd

New Business (Only if submitted four days prior to meeting date, so it
can be posted online 3 days prior)

Offering Collection and Closing Prayer

Adjournment

(By rule of the presbytery, no later than 4:00 pm, unless the assembly
votes by a 2/3 majority to extend beyond)

*Following adjournment, clerks will meet for session records review in
Room TBA.*

The next Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of New Covenant will be
Saturday, November 15, 2014 at Indian Presbyterian Church
1072 Colabe Road, Livingston, TX 77351 [936/563-5166](tel:9365635166)

Omnibus Motion

A

To approve the minutes of the Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of New Covenant held on March 22, 2014. (found online to save paper)

Table of Motions

From the Stated Clerk

Motion: To validate that the congregation of Grace Presbyterian Church, Houston, Texas has fulfilled the requirements for dismissal according to the Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure of the Presbytery of New Covenant.

Motion: Having met the requirements for seeking dismissal, the congregation of Grace Presbyterian Church of Houston, Texas is dismissed to the ECO: Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians pending completion of the transfer to that body.

From Committee on Ministry

The committee recommends and moves that the examination of Kathleen Davies, candidate for ordination, be sustained. Kathleen is nominated to serve as Pastor of Community of the Servant Savior, Houston, Texas.

The committee recommends and moves that the examination of Brian Long, candidate for ordination, be sustained. Brian is nominated to serve as Pastor of New Hope Presbyterian Church, Katy, Texas.

The committee recommends and moves that the examination of Brandon Gaide, candidate for ordination, be sustained. Brandon is nominated to serve as Associate Pastor of Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church, Houston, Texas.

The committee recommends and moves that the examination of Christy Klick, candidate for ordination, be sustained. Brian is nominated to serve as Associate Pastor of Spring Branch Presbyterian Church, Houston, Texas.

The committee recommends and moves that the Rev. Dr. James M. Gill be installed as Pastor of Faith Presbyterian Church, Baytown, Texas. This action requires a 75% vote of the members of presbytery present and voting (G-2.0504c).

The committee recommends and moves that the Rev. Guinn Blackwell-Eagleson be granted honorable retirement.



Goal: \$700,000 in support of
**New Covenant
International Student Fellowship**
at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

New Covenant Presbytery has an opportunity to increase diversity and impact global Christianity by funding a full fellowship—tuition, housing, and living expenses—for a qualified international student to attend Austin Seminary each year.

- Students receiving these fellowships to study at Austin Seminary come from one of three institutions: Reformed Theological Collegium, Debrecen, Hungary; Justo Mwale Theological University College, Lusaka, Zambia; and the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa.
- International students may also be granted a fellowship if they are sponsored by the Worldwide Ministries Division of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the World Council of Churches, or the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.
- The cost to host an international student and provide full tuition, books, housing, living expenses, and travel is \$35,000 per academic year.

The goal of the international student fellowship program is to enrich the practice of ministry and equip church leaders, through diversification of the student body, with students from around the world who bring with them a more global perspective.

Your gift toward the \$700,000 goal for the **New Covenant International Student Fellowship** fund would support one international student each year and be a reflection of our shared interest in preparing leaders who are able to engage with and have a deeper understanding of global Christianity.

"I consider myself as one of the blessed people to study at Austin Seminary because



I was exposed to a new world with the American culture, approach to studies, technology, theological training system, and generally new life altogether. I gained a lot of skills, knowledge, insights, and a new way of thinking which are actually bearing fruits now."

**—Lameck Banda (MATS '03)
Lusaka, Zambia**

The offering received at the July 19 presbytery meeting will be designated to the New Covenant International Student Fellowship Fund. Please make your checks payable to: Austin Seminary

For details about the New Covenant International Student Fellowship, see Rose Niles, Development Officer for Austin Seminary, in the display area.



**AUSTIN PRESBYTERIAN
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

100 East 27th Street | Austin, TX 78705-5711
austinseminary.edu | 512-404-4886

Presbytery of New Covenant
Report of the Stated Clerk
July 19, 2014

B

1. Administrative Commissions for Installations/Ordinations

We thank those who served on these commissions and dismiss them with our gratitude.

To ordain the Rev. Charles Kelly, called as Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Las Animas, Colorado, on April 6, 2014, at 2:00 pm. The candidate answered the questions of ordination in the affirmative.

To ordain and install the Rev. Greg Davis as Pastor of San Pablo + Trinity Presbyterian Church, Houston, Texas, on April 12, 2014, at 4:00 pm. The candidate answered the questions of ordination and installation in the affirmative.

To ordain and install the Rev. Ryan Kim as Associate Pastor of Korean Central Presbyterian Church, Houston, Texas, on April 20, 2014, at 11:00 am. The candidate answered the questions of ordination and installation in the affirmative.

To install the Rev. Kathleen Doebling as Director of Campus Ministries of United Campus Ministries Aggieland, College Station, Texas, on April 24, 2014, at 6:30 pm. The candidate answered the questions of installation in the affirmative.

To ordain and install the Rev. Alex Cornell as Pastor of St. Stephen Presbyterian Church, Houston, Texas, on June 8, 2014, at 5:00 pm. The candidate answered the questions of ordination and installation in the affirmative.

2. For information: Letters were received from TE Kevin Rudolph and TE Patricia Ryan renouncing jurisdiction of the PC(U.S.A.). They serve Houston, Windwood.
3. For approval by the presbytery

The congregation of Grace Presbyterian Church of Houston voted to enter into the Gracious Reconciliation and Discernment Process (GRDP) on October 20, 2013. The Stated Clerk, Lynn Hargrove, invited Jim Allison (RE, Houston, Pines), John Hirling (TE, Houston, Westminster), Kristin Huffman (TE, Houston, MDPC) and Janet Rainey (RE, Katy, New Hope) to serve on the discernment team. They were joined by Deb Castillo, Paul Craig (session), Hardie Morgan (staff) and Edie Purgason. The team agreed to have Cassandra Dahnke (TE, Houston, Woodforest) serve as the facilitator of the group.

The group met often beginning in December of 2013, continuing until April, 2014, at which time they made their report (as required by the GRDP. Their report can be found beginning on page 13.



10555 Spring Cypress Rd.
Houston, TX 77070
281-378-4040
www.windwoodpc.org

May 18, 2014

Lynn Hargrove, Stated Clerk
Presbytery of New Covenant
1110 Lovett Blvd.
Houston, TX 77006-3824

Dear Lynn,

Pursuant to the vote of the congregation of Windwood Presbyterian Church on this date to disaffiliate from the PC(USA), I am hereby informing you that I am also renouncing the jurisdiction of the PC(USA) and transferring my ordination to ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians.

When I was ordained in 1983, I agreed to place myself under the authority of a denomination that placed itself under the authority of the Inspired Word of God. Over the decades the commitment of the denomination to maintain that standard has come into question. In May of 2011, when the majority of Presbyteries approved the change in the ordination standards so that Scripture was no longer authoritative but only one "guideline" to be considered, that promise to be subject to the authority of Scripture was broken. I will not continue to submit to the jurisdiction of a denomination that will not submit to the authority of the Word of God.

For the sake of the congregation at Windwood, I have remained within the denomination longer than I would have because of the vow I took to pastor the people here. I no longer have to be concerned with that conflict of conscience. I have not made this decision lightly, but I felt you should know the reasons behind my decision.

I was raised at First Presbyterian Church of San Diego which was part of the UPCUSA. I have appreciated the care, concern, teaching, and guidance I have received throughout my life from the Presbyterian Church and I am sad that the denomination I once knew has departed from the historic faith it used to hold to, and that I still hold to. My prayer would be for the PC(USA) to repent and return to the faith upon which it was founded, but that is a prayer I will have to make from the jurisdiction of a denomination that will continue to hold to that historic faith.

Please notify the appropriate bodies of my decision.

In Christ,


Rev. Kevin C. Rudolph



Rev. Kevin C. Rudolph
Senior Pastor

Rev. Patricia L. Ryan
Associate Pastor

May 18, 2014

Lynn Hargrove, Stated Clerk
Presbytery of New Covenant
1110 Lovett Boulevard
Houston, TX 77006-3824

Dear Lynn,

In accordance with the outcome of the congregational vote of Windwood Presbyterian Church of this date, to disaffiliate from the PC(USA), I hereby inform you that I am renouncing jurisdiction of the PC(USA) and transferring my ordination to ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians.

This decision is based on much prayer and deliberation. I entered this covenant vow with the PC(USA) with great hope and anticipation of my obedience to God's call to pastoral ministry. With a firm belief in the solemnity of my vows, without a doubt, the day of my ordination in the PC(USA) was one of the most joyous days of my life. Over the past few years, however, as I have observed the steady movement of the PC(USA) in a direction I cannot support, as it has removed the ordination standards once obediently upheld in accordance to scriptural directives and has abandoned the authority of Scripture to merely a "guideline," my decision was affirmed.

The pastoral covenant I entered into with the Windwood family of faith bound me to a denomination that I believe has abandoned the faith we once shared. Since the vote of the congregation on May 18, 2014, I have been released from that commitment. Regrettably, I no longer am able to affiliate with the PC(USA), as the faith that once united us is now only a memory.

In good faith, I have engaged and served in this presbytery since my examination to enter as a minister member was upheld in 2004. I have been blessed in the connections and friendships I have made during my membership in the Presbytery of New Covenant and am truly sad that our differences now require us to part ways.

My prayers and good wishes will always be with the people of the Presbytery of New Covenant and I ask God's continued guidance and favor on you as I implore you to prayerfully reconsider your position as you serve the cause of Christ's Church.

Please notify the appropriate bodies of my decision.

In His love and to His glory,

Reverend Patricia L. Ryan

10555 Spring Cypress Road, Houston, TX 77070
Phone: 281-378-4040 Fax: 281-378-4041 www.windwoodpc.org

Report of the Presbytery Discernment Team To the Congregation of Grace Presbyterian Church of Houston April 13, 2014

Recommendation on a Congregational Vote: *The Presbytery Discernment Team for Grace Presbyterian Church of Houston recommends that the Session of Grace call a meeting of the congregation in order to vote on whether Grace should request dismissal from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to ECO – A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians.* A congregational vote would, regardless of outcome, offer the best opportunity for reconciliation among members and for renewed focus on the mission of Jesus Christ.

Background

During 2013, the Session of Grace Presbyterian Church of Houston (Grace) considered concerns expressed by some members of the congregation who believed that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) [PC (USA)] had drifted from its historical and theological roots and that the mission and ministry of Grace might be adversely affected. A survey of the membership had found that, while theologically diverse,

“On average the church is theologically more conservative Currently the church appears to be in the midst of an active conflict that has not yet been resolved. In addition, there is a reduced level of confidence in the decision-making processes of the church.... It is possible that the leadership will need to engage in external resources for help.”¹

The survey revealed concerns, including a perceived decline in respect for the authority of Scripture and the centrality of Christ (both expressions of differences in Biblical interpretation) and concerns with recent and potential actions of the General Assembly regarding ordination standards and the definition of marriage.

Consequently, on October 20, 2013, the Session placed before a quorum of the congregation a motion to enter into the Discernment Procedure set out in the Presbytery of New Covenant’s Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure. This Discernment Procedure would provide a means to review these concerns in a structured, prayerful, God- and Christ-centered manner. The resolution to enter the Discernment Procedure was adopted by a vote of 552 to 64.

As a result of the congregation’s vote to enter into the Discernment Procedure, Grace’s Session covenanted with the Presbytery of New Covenant to form a presbytery discernment team (the “Team”) consisting of eight members: four members from Grace designated by the Session, and four members (two Teaching Elders and two Ruling Elders) designated by the Presbytery, together with a mutually agreed non-voting facilitator.

The Team’s mandated tasks, as described in the Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure, were:

¹ Holy Cow! Consulting. *Vital Signs – Summary Documents Generated from Church Assessment Tool for Grace Presbyterian Church of Houston*, September 12, 2013

- (i) to be guided by prayerful dialog and sharing to assist Grace's Discernment Serve Team in the design of a discernment process for Grace that would honor Jesus Christ and strengthen both the congregation and the Presbytery, and help the congregation decide if it was being led by God to restore fellowship with the PC (USA) or to seek dismissal from the denomination,
- (ii) to provide multiple opportunities for the congregation members to respectfully connect, identify, learn about, and reflect on common ground and foundational differences associated with their theological and ecclesiastical concerns,
- (iii) to listen to and suggest ways for Grace's Session and Discernment Serve Team to address the concerns, sensitivities, and questions of congregation members, and
- (iv) at the conclusion of the season of discernment, to report and make recommendations to both the Congregation (in the form of a "town hall" meeting) and the Presbytery.

The discernment process adopted for Grace by the Team was a modified version of that designed for First Presbyterian, Houston and included:

- Five educational Learning Journeys (non-debate style presentations by two speakers, followed by a period of questions for clarification) designed to address pre-determined topics; and
- Three Café Dialogs (small structured discussion groups using guided questions) designed to generate mutual understanding through the sharing of insights, perspectives, and concerns including those generated from the preceding Learning Journeys.

Each event was preceded by a fellowship dinner, and opened and closed with singing and prayer. The independent facilitator, Steve Capper, encouraged participants to listen in order to learn; to relax their grip on certainty; and to keep their hearts, minds, and wills open to the presence and working of the Holy Spirit. The events and topics are described in Appendix 1.

The Team acknowledges the difficulty of trying to present sufficient information for each of the chosen topics. Therefore, much of the work of understanding the issues and concerns must necessarily and ultimately be done by individual Grace members.

The Team covenanted to maintain an intentional "ministry of presence" by attending all the scheduled events and fellowshiping with participants. We also familiarized ourselves with all the documents generated and shared by both the Communications and the Issues and Analysis working groups of the Grace Discernment Serve Team, and the information and resources available from presbytery, the denomination, and First Presbyterian, Houston. Written comments and concerns generated by the 2013 congregational survey and the Café Dialog participant response sheets were also shared and read. The Team met twelve times prior to this town hall meeting, beginning on December 8, 2013, including after every Learning Journey and Café Dialog. Team members also contributed to Grace's weekly discernment email updates.

Participants' written responses to the Café Dialog questions included concerns over perceived changes in the PC (USA), covering aspects such as mission, evangelism, Biblical interpretation (including in the authority of Scripture and Christology), diversity, political activism, and social justice. Additional feedback noted potential risks associated with a possible dismissal to the new denomination ECO – A

Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (ECO) and the potential effect of a dismissal on the Grace community.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- The requirements of the Presbytery's Discernment Procedure have been followed faithfully, as written and in spirit, over a six-month period from October 2013 to the present time.
- We believe that Grace's season of discernment has been fair, respectful, informative, balanced, open, transparent, loving, and gracious.
- The Session has decided that, in the event of a call for a congregational vote on dismissal, the Reformed body included in the motion for dismissal will be ECO.
- The final Café Dialog disclosed that passionate concerns still remain in the hearts and minds of a sufficient number of members (on each side and in the middle of the issues) that a congregational vote, regardless of outcome, would offer the best opportunity for reconciliation and relational healing among members and for renewed focus on the mission of Jesus.
- Therefore, the Team **recommends** that the Session of Grace Presbyterian Church of Houston call a meeting of the congregation for the purpose of voting on whether to seek dismissal to ECO or to remain in a covenant relationship with the PC (USA). The congregation has been informed of the quorum and super-majority rules required by the Presbytery's Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure.
- If Grace's Session enacts our recommendation, we further **recommend** that a process be implemented to provide opportunities for members to express their opinions and to ask any further questions.
- The Team **recommends** that it continue its ministry of presence by attending the events up to and including any congregational meeting. The Team also remains available to be a resource to the Grace Congregation and Session.
- The Team **recommends** that the Session and pastoral staff share their views with the congregation in separate but similar and mutually agreed ways that model graciousness, hope, and trust in God's abiding love and plan for Grace Presbyterian Church.

It has been a privilege to serve on the Presbytery Discernment Team for Grace. We thank you for your generosity of spirit and love, and pray that you are blessed with hope, healing, and peace.

Blessings in Christ,

RE James C. Allison, Pines Presbyterian Church, Houston

Deborah Castillo, Grace Presbyterian Church, Houston

RE Paul Craig, Grace Presbyterian Church, Houston

TE Cassandra Dahnke, Woodforest Presbyterian Church, Houston (Facilitator)

TE John Hirling, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Houston

TE Kristin Huffman, Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church, Houston

Hardie Morgan, Grace Presbyterian Church, Houston
RE Edie Purgason, Grace Presbyterian Church, Houston
RE Janet Rainey, New Hope Presbyterian Church, Katy
Appendix 1
Listing of Discernment Events and Topics

First Café Dialog - January 26, 2014

QUESTIONS:

- Take about 3 minutes each to describe a time when you experienced community at Grace at its very best – when the church lived into the vision we see in the New Testament for the local expression of the Body of Christ...tell the story.
- When it's at its best, what do you value most about Grace as a community of faith?
- What are core personal values that inspire you to be a contributing member of Grace as a community of faith and the local expression of the body of Christ?
- As we meet together in the Discernment events, how can we speak honestly with each other in such a way that we strengthen the fabric of the fellowship of our church?
- What question or topic do you sense is important for us to address during our season of discernment (exit question).

First Learning Journey - Theology: Biblical Authority - February 9, 2014

SPEAKERS:

- Rev. Dr. Jim Singleton, Professor, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
- Rev. Dr. Cynthia Rigby, Professor, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Second Learning Journey - Theology: Christology - February 16, 2014

SPEAKERS:

- Rev. Jack Haberer, Editor of The Presbyterian Outlook, retired PC(USA) pastor
- Rev. Dr. Clay Brown, Senior Pastor, Westminster Presbyterian Church - Amarillo, Texas

Second Café Dialog - February 23, 2014

QUESTIONS:

- What thoughts and feelings surfaced in you as you listened to the Learning Journey presentations, or as you read through papers at the links on the Season of Discernment website, about the interpretation and authority of the Scriptures?
- Share about a place where “the plain reading of Scripture” does not align with something in your life, or in the life experience of someone you care deeply about; and share the thoughts and questions that surface in you because of this.
- What thoughts and feelings surfaced in you as you listened to the Learning Journey presentations, or as you read through papers at the links on the Season of Discernment website, about the views on Christology/“Christ Alone”?
- In the first two Learning Journeys, the focus was on "The Interpretation & Authority of Scripture" and on "Christology - the person and work of Jesus Christ." What thoughts, feelings, concerns do you have about the alignment or lack of alignment that Grace Presbyterian Church has with others in the PC(USA) on these topics, and why?

Third Learning Journey - Theology: Mission & Ministry - March 2, 2014

SPEAKERS:

- Rev. Dr. Rhashell D. Hunter, Director of Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries/PW in the Presbyterian Mission Agency of the PC(USA)
- Marilyn Borst, Associate Director for Partnership Development with The Outreach Foundation

Fourth Learning Journey - Property, Financial & Other Practical Matters - March 9, 2014

SPEAKERS:

- Frank Sommerville, shareholder in the law firm of Weycer, Kaplan, Pulaski & Zuber, P.C.
- Stan Beyer, retired attorney and active Grace Ruling Elder and chair of the Session Administration and Finance Committee

Fifth Learning Journey - Denominational Characteristics - March 23, 2014

SPEAKERS:

- Rev. Mike Cole, General Presbyter, Presbytery of New Covenant PC(USA)
- John Terech, Director of Operations, ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians

Third Café Dialog - March 30, 2014

QUESTIONS:

- What have you learned through the Discernment Process that is "new" for you, or what insight has emerged for you?
- Of the things you have heard or read during this Discernment Process, what most concerns you, and why?
- What topics or issues that you wanted to know more about have not been addressed during the Discernment Process? Or, what topics or issues do you want to know more about in order to be fully informed?
- If Grace were deciding today whether to remain a part of PC(USA) or move to ECO, what do you sense God leading the church to do, and why? And what concerns do you have about each possible outcome?

The congregational vote was held on June 1, 2014. Membership as of April 23, 2014, was 1998. Per the presbytery's Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure, this is the day that the letter was sent to the congregation calling the meeting. 1019 ballots were cast which constitutes a quorum of 51%. The vote was 910 (89.3%) to 109 (10.7%) with 3 abstentions, and 114 who were eligible but did not vote. This complies with the requirements of the Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure.

Motion: To validate that the congregation of Grace Presbyterian Church, Houston, Texas has fulfilled the requirements for dismissal according to the Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure of the Presbytery of New Covenant.

Motion: Having met the requirements for seeking dismissal, the congregation of Grace Presbyterian Church of Houston, Texas is dismissed to the ECO: Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians pending completion of the transfer to that body.

Report of the Joint Presbytery/Grace Engagement Team

The engagement teams designated by Grace and Presbytery of New Covenant along with facilitator Steve Capper met on June 24 and June 25, 2014 to work out the proposed terms of dismissal of Grace Presbyterian Houston of Houston from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians. These discussions considered a wide variety of issues including the spiritual needs of the Grace congregation and Houston community, Presbytery's need for a continued revenue stream to offset the per capita that Grace would have paid the Presbytery and Grace's financial position and valuation of property. Also considered was the value of any right that the PC(USA) may hold for the use and benefit of Grace's property.

The discussion eventually centered on a tithe of Grace's unrestricted income as a reasonable compensation to Presbytery for the impact of Grace's dismissal. Presbytery's representatives originally focused on the combined fiscal 2012/2013 total unrestricted revenue, gains and other support of the Grace church, the Grace School and the adjacent shopping center. A schedule of the combined fiscal total unrestricted revenue, gains and other support for the 2012/2013 fiscal year is included in Exhibit I.

The Grace team raised a number of issues with this approach, the most important of which was the inclusion of the revenues of the school and the adjacent shopping center in the analysis and the use of more current financial statements. Under agreement with the Grace School community, the revenues and assets of Grace School are maintained separately from those of the church and are not available for church operations. Other issues discussed were the inclusion or exclusion of non-contribution revenues as these are primarily reimbursements of costs incurred for ministry activities. The Grace representatives also proposed excluding restricted gifts.

The combined team agreed that an appropriate number on which to base a tithe was the June 1, 2013 to May 31, 2014 unrestricted offerings and contribution revenue for Grace church (excluding the school and shopping center) which were \$4,351,893. Exhibit II shows the combined fiscal total unrestricted revenue, gains and other support (including offerings and contributions) for the twelve months ended May 31, 2014. The offerings and contributions revenue for the twelve months ended May 31, 2014 is lower than they were in the 2012/2013 fiscal year because that year's contributions included the last six months of collections from a two year stewardship campaign that was designed to fund debt reduction and other initiatives as well as the general operations of the church.

The joint team agreed to propose to Presbytery an all-inclusive settlement of \$440,000 which is just more than ten percent of the \$4,351,893 June 1, 2013 to May 31, 2014 unrestricted offerings and contribution revenue for Grace church. This tithe includes the required per member share of the presbytery budget (\$) and a voluntary contribution. Since it appears that those voting to remain in the PCUSA do not wish to start a new PCUSA church, there is no specific contribution for and NCD included in this tithe. The presbytery will continue to encourage and guide those who wish to transfer their membership from Grace to another congregation. The team agreed that under the proposal Grace would have the option to pay this amount in five equal annual installments of \$88,000 each, the first of which would be due upon dismissal.

Submitted by: Presbytery representatives TE Jeff Smith, RE Shelley Hernandez, RE Dave Coles, and Grace representatives RE David Finck, RE Debbie Kaplan, TE Sam Knight, RE Stan Beyer, RE and Trustee Jim Hunt, Hardie Morgan

Exhibit I

Fiscal 2012/2013 Total Unrestricted Revenues, Gains and Other Support

| 2012/2013 FISCAL YEAR | Grace Church | Grace School | West Mall | Endowment | Eliminations | 2013 |
|---|--------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|------------|
| Revenues and gains | | | | | | |
| Offerings and contributions | 5,270,572 | - | - | - | - | 5,270,572 |
| Ministry related fees and revenue | 527,881 | - | - | - | - | 527,881 |
| Other church activities | 1,894 | - | - | - | - | 1,894 |
| Tuition and fees | - | 5,869,044 | - | - | - | 5,869,044 |
| Rental revenues | - | - | 419,875 | - | - | 419,875 |
| In-kind rental revenues | - | - | 321,052 | - | - | 321,052 |
| Investment income | 13,323 | 1,788 | - | - | - | 15,111 |
| Other revenues and gains | (41,854) | 506,833 | - | - | 46,854 | 511,833 |
| Total unrestricted revenues and gains | 5,771,816 | 6,377,665 | 740,927 | - | 46,854 | 12,937,262 |
| Net assets released from restrictions | | | | | | |
| Satisfaction of program restrictions | 407,214 | 297,726 | - | - | - | 704,940 |
| Expiration of time restrictions | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total net assets released from restrictions | 407,214 | 297,726 | - | - | - | 704,940 |
| Total unrestricted revenue, gains and other support | 6,179,030 | 6,675,391 | 740,927 | - | 46,854 | 13,642,202 |

Note: In order to improve clarity of this statement the net assets released from restrictions due to expirations of time restrictions have been included with unrestricted offerings and contribution revenue. This has no impact on the total unrestricted revenue, gains and other support.

Exhibit II

June 1, 2013 to May 31, 2014 Total Unrestricted Revenues, Gains and Other Support

| TWELVE MONTHS ENDING 5/31/2014 | Grace Church | Grace School | West Mall | Endowment | Eliminations | 6/1/2013- 5/31/2014 |
|---|--------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|------------------------|
| Revenues and gains | | | | | | |
| Offerings and contributions | 4,351,893 | - | - | - | - | 4,351,893 |
| Ministry related fees and revenue | 276,777 | - | - | - | - | 276,777 |
| Other church activities | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Tuition and fees | - | 6,287,150 | - | - | - | 6,287,150 |
| Rental revenues | - | - | 424,426 | - | - | 424,426 |
| In-kind rental revenues | - | - | 321,052 | - | - | 321,052 |
| Investment income | 17,011 | (11,560) | - | - | - | 5,451 |
| Other revenues and gains | - | 421,491 | - | - | - | 421,491 |
| Total unrestricted revenues and gains | 4,645,681 | 6,697,080 | 745,478 | - | - | 12,088,239 |
| Net assets released from restrictions | | | | | | |
| Satisfaction of program restrictions | 253,443 | 249,006 | - | - | - | 502,449 |
| Expiration of time restrictions | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total net assets released from restrictions | 253,443 | 249,006 | - | - | - | 502,449 |
| Total unrestricted revenue, gains and other support | 4,899,124 | 6,946,086 | 745,478 | - | - | 12,590,688 |

Note: In order to improve clarity of this statement the net assets released from restrictions due to expirations of time restrictions have been included with unrestricted offerings and contribution revenue. This has no impact on the total unrestricted revenue, gains and other support.

Exhibit III

Explanation of Terms Used in Exhibits I and II

Revenues and gains – Offerings and contributions: Unrestricted contributions collected during the period.

Revenues and gains – Ministry related fees and revenue: Revenue from items such as rental collected from tenants in apartments maintained by Grace for Medical Center patients, collections for youth retreats and sport leagues and food services charges. Generally a reimbursement of costs incurred.

Revenues and gains – Other church activities: Miscellaneous revenue such a facility rental.

Revenues and gains – Tuition and fees: Tuition and fees at Grace School.

Revenues and gains – Rental revenues: Rental fees charged to tenants at the Grace shopping center. The center currently operates at a loss.

Revenues and gains – In-kind rental revenues: Fair value of space in Grace shopping center for space leased to non-profits. There is an offsetting expense for this item as no cash is collected.

Revenues and gains – Investment income: Interest and dividend income on unrestricted assets included realized and unrealized gains and losses.

Revenues and gains – Other revenues and gains: For Grace Church this is primarily the loss incurred by the shopping center which is eliminated in consolidation. For Grace School it is amounts from sales of school supplies, book fair and other programs.

Net assets released from restrictions – Satisfaction of program restrictions: This is the amount of restricted gifts for which the restrictions where met (by the funds being expended) during the year. Since there is an offsetting expense, revenues from net assets released from restrictions have no impact on cash flow.

Net assets released from restrictions – Expiration of time restrictions: This is collections of pledges. For clarity purposes these have been included with *Revenues and gains – Offerings and contributions*.

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY
Presbytery Report
July 19, 2014

D

I. Recommended for Actions

- A. The committee recommends and moves that the Teaching Elder Guinn Blackwell-Eagleson be granted Honorably Retired status effective August 31, 2014.
- B. The committee recommends and moves that Faith Presbyterian Church, Baytown, granted permission to call Teaching Elder James Gill. Book of Order G-2.0504c
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Salary</i> | <i>\$38,000</i> |
| <i>Housing /Utility Allowance</i> | <i>30,000</i> |
| <i>Auto Allowance</i> | <i>5,000</i> |
| <i>Books, Professional Dues</i> | <i>1,000</i> |
| <i>Moving</i> | <i>3,000</i> |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | <i>23,800</i> |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | <i>1,700</i> |
| <i>Student Leave</i> | <i>2 weeks</i> |
| <i>Vacation</i> | <i>4 weeks</i> |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | |
- C. The committee recommends and moves that the examination of **Kathleen Kendall Davies**, candidate for ordination be sustained; nominated to serve part-time as Designated Pastor of Community of the Servant Savior.
- D. The committee recommends and moves that the examination of **Brian Long** candidate for ordination be sustained; nominated to serve as Designated Pastor at New Hope Presbyterian Church, Katy, TX
- E. The committee recommends and moves that the examination of **Brandon Gaide** candidate for ordination be sustained; nominated to serve as Associate Pastor for Next GEN Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church, Houston, TX
- F. The committee recommends and moves that the examination of **Kristi Click** candidate for ordination be sustained; nominated to serve as Designated Associate Pastor at Spring Branch Presbyterian Church, Houston.

II. Actions taken on behalf of Presbytery

- A. Approved Pastoral Calls
1. **Kathleen Kendall Davies**, candidate for ordination, called to serve as part-time Designated Pastor at Community of Servant Savior, Houston, TX for a 3 year term. Approved by COM 4/1/14; sustained the examination by the Committee on Examinations held on 4/26/14; COM sustained examination on 5/6/14.

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| <i>Salary</i> | <i>\$11,612</i> |
| <i>Housing & Utilities Allowance</i> | <i>11,611</i> |
| <i>Social Security Allowance</i> | <i>1,777</i> |
| <i>Auto Allowance @ IRA Rate</i> | <i>1,000</i> |
| <i>Books, Professional Dues</i> | <i>200</i> |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | <i>8,750</i> |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | <i>1,250</i> |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | <i>2 weeks</i> |

Vacation 4 weeks
Annual Review On or about May 2015

Candidate Under Care of Southern New England Presbytery
 Formal Education: 1995 BA, Religion, Baylor University;
 1999 MDiv, Yale Divinity School, Yale University.

(Statement of Faith follows COM Report in Packet).

2. **Brandon Gaide**, candidate for ordination, called to serve as Associate Pastor for Next Generation Ministry at Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church, Houston, TX. Approved by COM 5/6/14; sustained the examination by the Committee on Examinations held on 5/31/14; COM sustained examination on 6/3/14.

| | |
|---|------------------|
| <i>Salary</i> | \$37,72 |
| <i>Housing /Utility Allowance</i> | 32,000 |
| <i>Social Security Compensation 7.65% & above</i> | 3,975 |
| <i>Auto Allowance IRS Rate</i> | .56 |
| <i>Books, Professional Dues</i> | 500 |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | Full |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | 2,450 |
| <i>Student Leave</i> | 2 weeks + 3 days |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 4 weeks |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | |

Candidate under care of New Covenant Presbytery.

Formal Education: 2004 BA, Religion Studies, University of Texas, Austin;
 2008 Diploma in Christian Studies, Regent College, Vancouver
 2010 MTh, Fuller Theological Seminary, Sacramento, CA
 2013 MDiv (equivalency), Fuller Theological Seminary, Houston, TX

(Statement of Faith follows COM Report in Packet).

3. **Brian Long**, candidate for ordination, called to serve as Designated Pastor at New Hope Presbyterian Church, Katy, TX for a 2 year term. Approved by COM 3/4/14; sustained examination by the Committee on Examinations held on 5/31/14; COM sustained examination on 6/3/14.

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Salary</i> | \$45,000.00 |
| <i>Auto Allowance @ IRS Rate</i> | @ IRS Rate |
| <i>Books, Professional Dues</i> | 500.00 |
| <i>Moving Expenses</i> | As needed |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | 15,750.00 |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | 2 weeks |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 4 Weeks |
| <i>Clergy Retreat</i> | 3 days + \$250 Study Leave |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | |

Candidate under care of New Covenant Presbytery.

Formal Education: 1991 BA, Journalism, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX
 2013 MDiv, Fuller Theological Seminary, Houston, TX

(Statement of Faith follows COM Report in Packet).

4. **Kristi Click**, candidate for ordination, called to serve as Designated Associate Pastor at Spring Branch Presbyterian Church, Houston, TX for a 3 year term. Approved by COM 6/3/14; sustained examination by the Committee on Examinations held on 6/28/14; COM sustained the examination on 6/30/14.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| <i>Salary</i> | \$23,900 |
| <i>Housing, Utility Allowance</i> | 18,000 |

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| <i>Auto Allowance @ IRS Rate</i> | <i>1,000</i> |
| <i>Books, Professional Dues</i> | <i>3,200</i> |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | <i>14,665</i> |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | <i>2,700</i> |
| <i>Study Leave Time</i> | <i>2.23 weeks</i> |
| <i>Vacation</i> | <i>4 weeks</i> |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | |
| Candidate under care of Grace Presbytery | |
| Formal Education: 2009 BA, Psychology & BA, Religion, Schreiner University, Kerrville, TX | |
| 2014 MDiv, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin, TX | |
| (Statement of Faith follows COM Report in Packet). | |

April 4, 2014 Action Items

B. Approved renewal of Parish Associate Covenant

1. Between TE Linda Herron and Houston, St. John's

C. Approve changes in terms of compensation

1. Between TE Jeff Smith and Houston, St. Andrew's effective 1/1/14

| | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Salary</i> | <i>\$69,368</i> | <i>\$79,264</i> |
| <i>Housing & Utilities Allowance</i> | <i>20,000</i> | <i>20,600</i> |
| <i>Other direct compensation/reimbursement</i> | <i>4,800</i> | <i>4,800</i> |
| <i>Other Allowances</i> | <i>3,000</i> | <i>3,000</i> |
| <i>Book , Professional Dues</i> | <i>3,000</i> | <i>3,000</i> |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | <i>32,263</i> | <i>37,682</i> |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | <i>1,485</i> | <i>2,000</i> |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | <i>2 weeks</i> | <i>2 weeks</i> |
| <i>Vacation</i> | <i>4 weeks</i> | <i>4 weeks</i> |
| <i>Reimbursement of Self–Employment Contribution (SECA)</i> | <i>8,056</i> | <i>8,236</i> |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | | <i>11/2014</i> |

2. Between TE John Melsness and Houston, St. Andrew's effective 1/1/14

| | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Salary</i> | <i>\$51,706</i> | <i>\$56,101</i> |
| <i>Housing & Utilities Allowance</i> | <i>5,100</i> | <i>5,100</i> |
| <i>Value of Manse</i> | <i>15,900</i> | <i>18,360</i> |
| <i>Book , Professional Dues</i> | <i>3,000</i> | <i>3,000</i> |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | <i>23,993</i> | <i>27,846</i> |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | <i>3,700</i> | <i>4,700</i> |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | <i>2 weeks</i> | <i>2 weeks</i> |
| <i>Vacation</i> | <i>4 weeks</i> | <i>4 weeks</i> |
| <i>Reimbursement of Self–Employment Contribution (SECA)</i> | <i>5,991</i> | <i>6,086</i> |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | | <i>11/2014</i> |

3. Between TE David Steane and Houston, Memorial Drive effective 3/1/14

| | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Salary</i> | <i>\$75,325</i> | <i>\$79,225</i> |
| <i>Housing & Utilities Allowance</i> | <i>50,000</i> | <i>50,600</i> |
| <i>Other direct compensation/reimbursement</i> | <i>3,975</i> | <i>3,975</i> |
| <i>Auto Allowance @ IRA Rate</i> | <i>.565</i> | <i>.56</i> |
| <i>Book , Professional Dues</i> | <i>500</i> | <i>500</i> |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | <i>full</i> | <i>full</i> |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | <i>1,450</i> | <i>1,450</i> |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | <i>2 weeks</i> | <i>2 weeks</i> |

| | | |
|--|----------------|----------------------|
| <i>Vacation</i> | <i>4 weeks</i> | <i>4 weeks</i> |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | | <i>February 2014</i> |
| 4. Between TE Rick Myers and Houston, Memorial Drive effective 3/1/14 | | |
| <i>Salary</i> | \$53,125 | \$56,025 |
| <i>Housing & Utilities Allowance</i> | 37,400 | 37,400 |
| <i>Other direct compensation/reimbursement</i> | 3,975 | 3,975 |
| <i>Auto Allowance @ IRA Rate</i> | .565 | .56 |
| <i>Book , Professional Dues</i> | 500 | 500 |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | <i>full</i> | <i>full</i> |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | 1,450 | 1,450 |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | 2 weeks | 2 weeks |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 4 weeks | 4 weeks |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | | <i>February 2014</i> |
| 5. Between TE Vicky Jones and Houston, Memorial Drive effective 3/1/14 | | |
| <i>Salary</i> | \$60,425 | \$63,325 |
| <i>Housing & Utilities Allowance</i> | 30,100 | 30,100 |
| <i>Other direct compensation/reimbursement</i> | 3,975 | 3,975 |
| <i>Auto Allowance @ IRA Rate</i> | .565 | .56 |
| <i>Book , Professional Dues</i> | 500 | 500 |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | <i>full</i> | <i>full</i> |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | 1,450 | 1,450 |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | 2 weeks | 2 weeks |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 4 weeks | 4 weeks |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | | <i>February 2014</i> |
| 6. Between TE Kristin Huffman and Houston, Memorial Drive effective 3/1/14 | | |
| <i>Salary</i> | \$58,525 | \$61,425 |
| <i>Housing & Utilities Allowance</i> | 32,000 | 32,000 |
| <i>Other direct compensation/reimbursement</i> | 3,975 | 3,975 |
| <i>Auto Allowance @ IRA Rate</i> | .565 | .56 |
| <i>Book , Professional Dues</i> | 500 | 500 |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | <i>full</i> | <i>full</i> |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | 1,450 | 1,450 |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | 2 weeks | 2 weeks |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 4 weeks | 4 weeks |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | | <i>February 2014</i> |
| 7. Between TE Mauricio Chacon and Houston, Memorial Drive effective 3/1/14 | | |
| <i>Salary</i> | \$35,825 | \$35,825 |
| <i>Housing & Utilities Allowance</i> | 43,600 | 43,600 |
| <i>Other direct compensation/reimbursement</i> | 3,975 | 3,975 |
| <i>Auto Allowance @ IRA Rate</i> | .565 | .56 |
| <i>Book , Professional Dues</i> | 500 | 500 |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | <i>full</i> | <i>full</i> |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | 1,450 | 1,450 |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | 2 weeks | 2 weeks |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 4 weeks | 4 weeks |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | | <i>February 2014</i> |

| | | |
|--|----------|---------------|
| 8. Between TE Jon Guyton and Houston, Pinecrest effective 1/1/14 | | |
| <i>Salary</i> | \$22,495 | \$22,495 |
| <i>Auto Allowance @ IRA Rate</i> | .565 | .56 |
| <i>Book , Professional Dues</i> | 500 | 500 |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | full | full |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | 850 | 850 |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | 2 weeks | 2 weeks |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 4 weeks | 4 weeks |
| <i>Reimbursement of Self–Employment Contribution (SECA)</i> | 1,856 | 1,856 |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | | February 2014 |
| 9. Between TE Steve Oglesbee and Houston, Clear Lake effective 4/1/14 | | |
| <i>Salary</i> | \$66,644 | \$70,178 |
| <i>Housing & Utilities Allowance</i> | 40,000 | 40,000 |
| <i>Social Security Compensation</i> | 8,627 | 9,127 |
| <i>Professional Expenses</i> | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | 38,039 | 41,757 |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | 1,670 | 1,670 |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | 2 weeks | 2 weeks |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 5 weeks | 5 weeks |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | | May 2014 |
| 10. Between TE Katrina Pennington and Houston, Clear Lake effective 4/1/14 | | |
| <i>Salary</i> | \$22,203 | \$23,658 |
| <i>Housing & Utilities Allowance</i> | 36,000 | 36,000 |
| <i>Social Security Compensation</i> | 4,821 | 4,942 |
| <i>Bonus</i> | 0 | 2,500 |
| <i>Professional Expenses</i> | 3,500 | 3,500 |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | 20,798 | 23,485 |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | 1,670 | 1,670 |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | 2 weeks | 2 weeks |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 4 weeks | 4 weeks |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | | May 2014 |
| 11. Between TE Rachel Young and Houston, Clear Lake effective 4/1/14 | | |
| <i>Salary</i> | \$18,094 | \$19,304 |
| <i>Housing & Utilities Allowance</i> | 35,000 | 35,000 |
| <i>Social Security Compensation</i> | 4,274 | 4,498 |
| <i>Professional Expenses</i> | 3,500 | 3,500 |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | 18,931 | 20,581 |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | 1,670 | 1,670 |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | 2 weeks | 2 weeks |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 4 weeks | 4 weeks |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | | May 2014 |
| 12. Between TE Dean Pogue and Katy, Grand Lakes effective 1/1/14 | | |
| <i>Salary</i> | \$32,000 | \$32,320 |
| <i>Housing & Utilities Allowance</i> | 45,282 | 45,735 |
| <i>Other direct compensation/reimbursement</i> | 1,050 | 1,200 |
| <i>Auto Allowance @ IRA Rate</i> | 3,500 | 3,500 |
| <i>Book , Professional Dues</i> | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | 25,850 | 27,739 |

| | | |
|---|------------------|-------------|
| Study Leave Allowance | 1,600 | 1,600 |
| Study Leave | 2 weeks | 2 weeks |
| Vacation | 4 weeks | 4 weeks |
| Reimbursement - Self Employment Contribution Act up to 7.65% | 6,455 | 6,063 |
| 13. Between TE Ryan Cook and Katy, Grand Lakes effective 1/1/14 | | |
| Salary | \$23,464 | \$25,440 |
| Housing & Utilities Allowance | 26,526 | 20,000 |
| Auto Allowance @ IRA Rate | 2,160 | 2,160 |
| Board of Pensions Dues | Full | 15,904 |
| Study Leave Allowance | 1,700 | 1,700 |
| Study Leave | 2 weeks | 2 weeks |
| Vacation | 4 weeks | 4 weeks |
| Reimbursement - Self Employment Contribution Act up to 7.65% | 3,707 | 3,476 |
| 14. Between TE Michael O'Neil and Angleton, First effective 1/21/14 | | |
| Salary | \$22,000 | \$24,500 |
| Housing & Utilities Allowance | 21,508 | 24,008 |
| Other Allowance or Insurance Payments | 3,000 | 4,686.60 |
| | 1,686.60 | |
| Auto Allowance @ IRA Rate | 3,000 | 3,000 |
| Book , Professional Dues | 300 | 300 |
| Board of Pensions Dues | 15,904.35 | 18,618.11 |
| Study Leave Allowance | 1,700 | 1,700 |
| Study Leave | 2 weeks | 2 weeks |
| Vacation | 4 weeks | 4 weeks |
| Reimbursement - Self Employment Contribution Act up to 7.65% | 3,971.27 | 4,069.39 |
| Annual Review | | June 2014 |
| 15. Between TE Harland Merriam and Beaumont, St. Andrews effective 1/1/14 | | |
| Salary | \$33,861.77 | \$34,539.01 |
| Housing & Utilities Allowance | 33,861.77 | 34,539.01 |
| Auto Allowance @ IRA Rate | 4,000 | 4,000 |
| Board of Pensions Dues | 22,348.80 | 24,177.30 |
| Study Leave Allowance | 1,325 | 1,325 |
| Study Leave | 2 weeks | 2 weeks |
| Vacation | 4 weeks | 4 weeks |
| Reimbursement - Self Employment Contribution Act up to 7.65% | 5,180.88 | 5,284.77 |
| 16. Between TE James Currie and Pasadena, First effective 1/1/14 | | |
| Salary | \$35,000 | \$36,000 |
| Housing & Utilities Allowance | 33,000 | 33,000 |
| Auto Allowance @ IRA Rate | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| Board of Pensions Dues | 24,060 | 24,150 |
| Study Leave Allowance | 1,500 | 2,000 |
| Study Leave | 2 weeks | 2 weeks |
| Vacation | 4 weeks | 4 weeks |
| Annual Review | To be determined | |
| 17. Between TE Mark Plunkett and Houston, Heritage effective 1/1/14 | | |
| Salary | | \$17,138 |
| Housing & Utilities Allowance | | 17,138 |

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| <i>Other compensation</i> | 8,000 |
| <i>Dental Insurance</i> | 924 |
| <i>Auto Allowance @ IRA Rate</i> | .565 |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | 15,120 |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | 1,600 |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | 2 weeks |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 4 weeks |

18. Between TE Becky Downs and Houston, John Knox effective 1/1/14

| | | |
|--|----------|----------|
| <i>Salary</i> | \$19,650 | \$20,240 |
| <i>Housing & Utilities Allowance</i> | 31,000 | 31,930 |
| <i>Social Security</i> | 4,256 | 4,381 |
| <i>Auto Allowance @ IRA Rate</i> | 2,500 | 2,500 |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | 17,394 | 19,792 |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | 2 weeks | 2 weeks |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 4 weeks | 4 weeks |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | | 12/28/14 |

D. Approved transfer of membership

1. TE Diane Prevary to Presbytery of the James effective 4/1/14
2. TE Alice Geils Nord to Presbytery of New Hope effective 4/1/14
3. TE Bernard Nord to Presbytery of New Hope effective 4/1/14

E. Approved ordination request for candidate under of presbytery Charles Kelly called to serve as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Las Animas, CO in Pueblo Presbytery.

F. Approved renewal of Commission Ruling Elder Contracts

1. Between Jim Mayer and Houston, St. Luke's for three years effective 3/16/14 – 3/15/17 and granted the following function: Lord's Supper
2. Between Jim Mayer and Vitas Innovative Hospice for three years effective 3/1/14 – 2/28/17 and granted the following functions: Lord's Supper and Baptism

G. Appointed Transition Team and or Liaison

1. Houston, Love - TE Sam Jun
2. Houston, Spring Branch - TE Belinda Koenig
3. The Woodlands, Timber Ridge/Alden Bridge – TE Charles Hendricks / RE Steve Haskins
4. Houston, MDPC – RE Anne Wilson

H. Approved MIF

1. The Woodlands, Alden Bridge – Interim Pastor
2. College Station, Covenant – Designated Pastor

I. Approved Commission to install and/or ordain

1. To ordain Charles Kelly on April 6, 2014 at Houston, St. Philip at 2 pm (approved Herron/Johnson on 3/26/14)
To preside and propound the constitutional questions: RE John Jo, Houston, Korean Central
To preach the sermon: TE John Wurster, Pastor Houston, St. Philip
To charge the pastor: TE Charlotte Kibler, Honorably Retired
To charge the congregation: TE Guinn Blackwell Eagleson, Member at Large
To complete the commission: TE Kristy Vits, Pastor, Bellaire, ChristChurch; RE Connie Brakebill, Pasadena, First; RE Sharon Darden, Houston, Pinecrest; RE Ron Langston, The Woodlands; RE Tom Montgomery, Houston, First; and TE Shawn Kang, Houston, Pathways.

2. To ordain and install Ryan Kim on April 20, 2014 at 11:00 am at Houston, Korean Central
 To preside and propound the constitutional questions: RE John Jo, Houston, Korean Central
 To preach the sermon: TE Jae Ho Yee, Pastor, Houston, Korean Central
 To charge the pastor: TE Lynn Hargrove, PNC Stated Clerk
 To charge the congregation: TE Mike Cole, PNC General Presbyter
 To complete the commission: RE Carrie Walker, Houston, University; and RE Jeffrey Jung, Houston, Korean Central
3. To ordain Gregory Davis on April 12, 2014 at 4:00 pm at Houston, San Pablo Trinity
 To preside and propound the constitutional questions: RE John Jo, Houston, Korean Central
 To preach the sermon: TE Isabel Rivera-Velez, Stated Supply, Houston, Juan Marcos
 To charge the pastor: TE Timothy Phillips, Member at Large
 To charge the congregation: TE Tomas Spath, Parish Associate, Houston, Woodforest
 To complete the commission: RE Elias Ramirez, Houston, San Pablo+Trinity; RE Sharon Darden, Houston, Pinecrest; TE Raymond Feyes, Honorably Retired; and TE Mike Cole, PNC General Presbyter.

May 6, 2014 Action Items

A. Approved changes in terms of compensation

1. Between TE Frederick Seay and Sugar Land, First effective 1/1/14

| | | |
|---|-----------------|------------------|
| <i>Salary</i> | <i>\$33,000</i> | <i>\$33,900</i> |
| <i>Housing /Utility Allowance</i> | <i>24,900</i> | <i>25,650</i> |
| <i>Other direct compensation .reimbursement</i> | <i>3,000</i> | <i>3,090</i> |
| <i>Auto Allowance</i> | <i>6,000</i> | <i>6,180</i> |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | <i>20,097</i> | <i>21,955.50</i> |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | <i>1,800</i> | <i>1,800</i> |
| <i>Student Leave</i> | <i>2 weeks</i> | <i>2 weeks</i> |
| <i>Vacation</i> | <i>4 weeks</i> | <i>4 weeks</i> |
| <i>Other paid group insurance – Dental</i> | <i>1,320</i> | <i>1,540</i> |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | | <i>Nov 2014</i> |

B. Approved transfer of membership

1. TE Alicimar Dantas Dias dismiss to effective January 15, 2010

C. Approved renewal of Commission Ruling Elder Contract

1. Between RE Phoy Vorabouth and Houston, First Lao with suggestion that he find a Presbyterian Mentor for two years, 1/1/14 – 1/31/16; with the following functions: Baptism; Lord's Supper; moderate Session; voice and vote at Presbytery Meeting; and perform marriages.

D. Approved request to Labor in the Bounds of New Covenant Presbytery

1. TE Thomas K. Reinowski from Pines Presbytery to labor in bounds on June 20 and 21, 2014 to perform the service of marriage for his daughter at Houston, Memorial Drive.

E. Approved ordination request for candidate under of presbytery, Amy Klinkovsky, called to serve as an Evangelist for a new worshiping community in Presbytery of Pacific

F. Approved request for TE Beth Faulk to remain a Member at Large in New Covenant Presbytery.

G. Approved Stated Supply contract between TE Beth Faulk and Silsbee, First; ¼ time for one year 3/3/14 – 3/3/15.

| | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| <i>Salary</i> | <i>\$11,200.00</i> |
|---------------|--------------------|

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| <i>Housing Allowance</i> | <i>5,000.00</i> |
| <i>Travel/Auto Allowance @ IRS Rate</i> | <i>6,000.00</i> |
| <i>Books, Professional Dues</i> | <i>1,080.00</i> |
| <i>Other</i> | <i>720.00</i> |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | <i>2,450.00</i> |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | <i>2 weeks</i> |
| <i>Vacation</i> | <i>4 weeks</i> |

- H. Granted permission to elect Pastor Nominating Committee
 - 1. Houston, Westminster
 - 2. Jasper, First
 - 3. Houston, Formosan - Associate Pastor for English Ministry

- I. Appointed Transition Team and or Liaison
 - 1. Houston, Westminster – RE Sharon Carey / need TE
 - 2. Jasper, First – TE Connie Alexander and RE Karen Akers
 - 3. Houston, Formosan – Associate Pastor for English Ministry – TE Linda Herron / RE Bob Patterson

- J. Approved MIF
 - 1. Houston, Love – approved by chair 4/15/14
 - 2. Houston, Spring Branch – Designated Associate Pastor

- K. Approved Commission to install and/or ordain
 - 1. To ordain and install Katherine Heston Doehring as Campus Minister of United Campus Ministry in Aggieland, College Station, TX on 4/24/14 at 6:30 pm
 To preside and propound the constitutional questions: RE John Jo, Moderator, Houston, Korean Central
 To preach the sermon: Rev. Dan DeLeon, Friends Congregational Church (UCC), College Station
 To charge the pastor: TE Ann Marie Quigley-Swanson, Associate Pastor, Houston, Northwoods
 To charge the congregation: TE Keaton King, Associate Pastor, Houston, St. Philip
 To complete the commission: RE Mario Gomez, Bryan, First; RE James Christiansen, College Station, Covenant; RE Vickie Buenger, Bryan, First; TE Ted Foote, Bryan, First; and TE Barbara Retzloff, Associate Pastor, Houston, Pines

 - 2. To ordain and install Alex Cornell as pastor of St. Stephen Presbyterian Church, Houston on 6/8/14 at 5 pm
 To preside and propound the constitutional questions:
 TE Pat Clark, Former Moderator NCP, Houston, HR
 To preach the sermon: TE Kelly Allen, Mission Presbytery, San Antonio, University
 To charge the pastor: RE Gary Cornell, Greater Atlanta Presbytery, Atlanta, GA, Central
 To Charge the Congregation: RE Laura Epps, Houston, St. Stephen
 To complete the Commission: TE Dr. Paul Hooker, NCP; RE Julie MacLemore Wells, Houston, St. Philip; RE Jesse Carmona, Houston, St. Stephen; TE Mary Jane Cornell, Greater Atlanta Presbytery, Tucker, GA, St. Andrew's; and RE Lorraine Reed. Houston, St. Philip

June 3, 2014 Action Items

- A. Received Annual Commissioned Ruling Elder Report from RE Jane Whitney

B. Approved contract for New Church Development Pastor

1. Between TE Daniel Nguyen and NCP part-time effective 1/1/14 - 1/15/15

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|----------|
| <i>Salary</i> | | \$ 5,448 |
| <i>Housing, Utility Allowance</i> | | 16,800 |
| <i>Books</i> | | 1,720 |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | | 12,330 |
| <i>Study Leave Time</i> | | 2 weeks |
| <i>Vacation</i> | | 4 weeks |

C. Approved changes in terms of compensation

1. Between TE Mike Cole, General Presbyter and Presbytery of New Covenant effective 1/1/14

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| <i>Salary</i> | \$48,776 | \$51,215 |
| <i>Housing, Utility Allowance</i> | 42,436 | 44,558 |
| <i>Auto Allowance</i> | <i>Actual</i> | <i>Actual</i> |
| <i>Board of Pensions</i> | 30,100 | 33,521 |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | 2,000 | 2,000 |
| <i>Study Leave Time</i> | 2 weeks | 2 weeks |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 4 weeks | 4 weeks |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | | By Dec 2014 |

2. Between RE Mary Marcotte, Associate General Presbyter and Presbytery of New Covenant effective 1/1/14

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| <i>Salary</i> | \$56,812 | \$59,653 |
| <i>Auto Allowance</i> | <i>Actual</i> | <i>Actual</i> |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | 18,748 | 20,879 |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | 2,000 | 2,000 |
| <i>Study Leave Time</i> | 2 weeks | 2 weeks |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 4 weeks | 4 weeks |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | | By Dec 2014 |

3. Between TE Lynn Hargrove, Stated Clerk and Presbytery of New Covenant, 70% time, effective 1/1/14

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| <i>Salary</i> | \$16,660 | \$17,493 |
| <i>Housing, Utility Allowance</i> | 16,660 | 17,493 |
| <i>Auto Allowance</i> | <i>Actual</i> | <i>Actual</i> |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | 12,398 | 13,858 |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | 1,190 | 1,190 |
| <i>Study Leave Time</i> | 2 weeks | 2 weeks |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 4 weeks | 4 weeks |
| <i>Annual Review</i> | | By Dec 2014 |

4. Between TE Mark Plunkett and Houston, Heritage (Revised) effective 3/1/14

| | | |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| <i>Salary</i> | \$17,600 | \$17,138 |
| <i>Housing, Utility Allowance</i> | 17,600 | 17,138 |
| <i>Reimbursement of Self-Employment 7.65%</i> | 1,697 | 0 |
| <i>Other direct compensation/reimbursement</i> | 3,000 (bonus) | 8,000 (403b9) |
| <i>Auto Allowance</i> | 1,356 | 1,356 |
| <i>Board of Pensions Dues</i> | 12,606 | 14,796 |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | 1,700 | 1,700 |
| <i>Study Leave Time</i> | 2 weeks | 2 weeks |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 4 weeks | 4 weeks |

Other paid group insurance – dental
Annual Review

801.96

924
9/14

D. Approved renewal of Parish Associate Contract

1. Between TE Tomas Spath and Houston, Woodforest

E. Approved Stated Supply Contract

1. Between Texas City and TE Richard Kleiman for one year beginning 6/2/14 – 6/1/15

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| <i>Salary</i> | \$ 8,400 |
| <i>Housing Allowance</i> | 9,600 |
| <i>Travel Reimbursement</i> | 4,800 |
| <i>Books/Professional Expense</i> | 1,200 |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | Time allowed |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 4 weeks |

2. Renewal between Tomball, First and TE Robert Rush part-time for one year 7/1/14 – 6/30/15

| | |
|------------------------------|----------|
| <i>Salary</i> | \$20,700 |
| <i>Housing Allowance</i> | 7,200 |
| <i>Travel Reimbursement</i> | 1,800 |
| <i>Study Leave Allowance</i> | 1,000 |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | 2 week |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 4 weeks |

F. Approved Renewal Interim Pastor Contract

1. Between Houston, Memorial Drive and TE Howard Edington for six months 6/14 –12/31/14

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| <i>Salary</i> | \$82,000 |
| <i>Housing and Car Allowance</i> | 30,000 |
| <i>Board of Pensions</i> | 10,000 |
| <i>Study Leave</i> | 1 week |
| <i>Vacation</i> | 2 weeks |

G. Approved Validating Ministry

1. TE Beth Faulk to serve as Co-Pastor (part-time) at Providence Church ECO.

H. Approved dissolving the relationship as per their renunciation of jurisdiction

1. Between Kevin Rudolph and Houston, Windwood effective 5/22/14
2. Between Patricia Ryan and Houston, Windwood effective 5/22/14

I. Approved dismissal as per their request.

1. Bob Bullock to ECO effective 6/1/13
2. Jim Davis to ECO effective 6/8/13
3. Alan Trafford to EPC effective 11/1/12
4. Clay Faulk to ECO effective 5/22 /14

J. Appointed Transition Team and or Liaison

1. Houston, Love - TE Sam Jun / need RE
2. Houston, Westminster - RE Sharon Carey /TE Linda Herron

K. Approved Commissions to install and/or ordain

1. To ordain Amy Klinkovsky on July 26, 2014 at 10 am at First Presbyterian Church, Bryan
To preside and propound the constitutional questions:
RE John Jo, Moderator NCP, Houston, Korean Central

To preach the sermon: TE Michael Brundeen, Mission Presbytery, Boerne, St. Mark
To charge the pastor: RE Mary Marcotte, Houston, Pines
To Charge the Congregation: TE Marie Mickey, Associate Pastor, Bryan, First
To complete the Commission: RE Barbara Bennett, Alvin, First; TE Jim Gentner, Pastor, West Columbia, Bethel; TE Jim Currie, Pastor, Pasadena, First; and TE Kyle Walker, Mission Presbytery, Austin, Faith

2. To ordain and install Kathleen Kendall Davies as Designated Pastor of A Community of the Servant Savior on August 24, 2014 at 2 pm.
To preside and propound the constitutional questions:
RE John Jo, Moderator NCP, Houston, Korean Central
To preach the sermon: TE Kelly Allen, Mission Presbytery, San Antonio, University
To charge the pastor: TE Pat Clark, HR NCP
To Charge the Congregation: TE Louise Row, HR NCP
To complete the Commission: RE Anne Wilson, Houston, St. Philip; RE Jerry Beetz, Houston, A Community of the Servant Savior; RE Pauline Kwang, Houston, A Community of the Servant Savior; and TE Ruling Anne Marie Quigley Swanson, Associate Pastor, Houston, Northwoods; and Dean Barkley Thompson, Christ Church Cathedral

L. Appointed TE Richard Kleiman as moderator of Texas City, First

III. INFORMATION

1. Received FastTrac Reports from the following: Galveston, Westminster; Houston, Pinecrest and Houston, Memorial Drive
2. Received Treasure Hunters Reports from the following: Dickinson, First; Beaumont, Pioneer and Houston, Wharton
3. Committee on Ministry met April 1, 2014; May 6, 2014 and June 3, 2014.
4. FaithWalking to be held October 14-15, 2014

STATEMENTS OF FAITH KATHLEEN KENDALL DAVIES

I believe in one God, the perfect, sovereign Creator and Sustainer of all things, existing in three Persons equal in power and glory; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

I believe in God the Giver of life and the Creator of the universe.

I believe that God created all life and called it good.

I believe that God is merciful and gracious and that God loves creation.

God created humankind in God's own image. Although made in the image of God, humanity has fallen; we like all of those before us, sin in our refusal to accept God as sovereign. No one can destroy the tyranny of sin in oneself or in our world; our only hope is to be delivered from it by God.

I believe in Jesus Christ who is my Lord and Savior.

I believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Word of God.

Jesus is both fully God and fully human. Jesus was crucified on a cross as a one-time act of total love and reconciliation. On the third day he rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, where, at the right hand of God, he now is our mediator and high priest. Jesus Christ set an example for us to love our neighbor, work toward justice for all creation, and be obedient to the will of God.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Comforter and the Encourager. I believe in the Holy Spirit as the Eternal Companion and fellowship of creation. The Spirit convicts us of sin and draws us to the Savior. Indwelling our

hearts, the Spirit gives new life to us, and empowers and imparts gifts to us for building up the body of Christ—the church. The Spirit also gives us the fruits, or character traits, which make our lives conform more closely to the character of Christ. The Holy Spirit instructs and guides us into all truth and seals us for the day of redemption.

Before the foundation of the world God established the plan for the redemption of all people in Christ. Our salvation is the work of God’s free grace

I believe in the community of believers, the Christian Church. Christ is the head of the Church. The Church finds her visible, yet imperfect, expression in local congregations where the Word of God is preached in its fullness and the sacraments are administered in their integrity, where spiritual discipline is practiced, and where loving fellowship is maintained. For her perfecting, she awaits the return of her Lord. I believe in the observance of the two sacraments: the Lord’s Supper and Baptism. I believe adults are baptized upon profession of faith, and infants upon the profession of their parents with our prayers that one day the Holy Spirit will bring these children to a personal belief in Jesus Christ as Lord.

BRIAN LONG

I believe in one all-powerful, all-knowing, loving, creator God. That God has, is, and will show God’s self in the form of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, prophesied in the Old Testament, present since before the beginning, born of a virgin, tortured and crucified, buried in a tomb, resurrected after three days as He foretold His disciples, and now sits with the Creator as our advocate.

The need for Christ’s crucifixion was brought about by sinning. Sinning is the exercise of free will in denying God, God’s laws, God’s love, God’s intentions for God’s creation, humans. Sin resulted in God’s perfect judgment, which was guilty, thus requiring the appropriate discipline of death, paid for by my savior Jesus Christ who lives.

Christ’s death on a cross was the price paid for the sins of the world, in all of their manifestations. It is through the death of Christ that the atonement, or the healing of the relationship between God and God’s people occurs. It is because of God’s grace that the Son sacrificed Himself on our behalf.

The third part of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit works in, around, and through us to guide, listen, and make felt God’s presence and God’s will.

I believe that it is through a believing, loving community with the embrace of God that God’s intentions will be realized, not through the actions of humanity alone, but by faith in Christ.

I further believe that God, God’s will, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit are further revealed in Scripture. Scripture is the inspired word of God. We are called to humbly approach the throne of God and Scripture, acknowledging our own fallibility in its interpretation.

I believe in the church universal as the body of Christ, with Christ as the head of that body. It is through the Church that the Holy Spirit works in a fallen world to bring about the works of God. It is through that church in all of its different shapes that the message of God’s love and salvific message is being delivered to all the people of God’s creation.

People are Baptized into the body of Christ. This action is both a physical and spiritual action. Baptism is the sign and seal of being chosen by God through a public display, thus signifying that one is part of the body of Christ. In a spiritual sense, it is the taking of the individual, and through the work of the Holy Spirit, and making them a new creation in Christ.

The Lord's Supper, or taking of the bread and wine, is also a sign and seal that causes us to remember Christ, celebrate our Baptisms, and nourishes us in our spiritual journey.

BRANDON GAIDE

I belong to the One Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

I have been found in a universe created by God, who animates it and sustains it with absolute sovereignty. God created me and every other person as the crown of this creation, in whom God invested God's Own image, by which we are all given incomparable value and purpose.

I contributed to the twisting of God's image, however, and in so doing helped introduce sin into God's good creation. Because of my sin, I dislodged myself from God's perfect care, and suffered the depravity of a life in opposition to God. I contributed to the corruption of the earth, so that what was once characterized with love, kindness, beauty, and peace, became distorted and broken.

But God refused to abandon me even though I turned my back to God. While I was still rebellious, God sought me out by God's own initiative, and the whole world along with me. God sent His Son in the form of a man for the salvation of the world. Jesus was born of a virgin mother and lived a life of perfect obedience to His Heavenly Father. His teachings and life on earth show me what it means to be truly human. He chose to be humble though He deserved honor. He sought the welfare of others at the expense of His life. He prioritized the people the world neglected. Though faultless, He was crucified, and allowed Himself to suffer that injustice. His one sacrifice paid the ransom all our sins had incurred. His sacrifice accomplished what we could not: reconciliation with God. After His death, Jesus was raised and is alive again today, having conquered death itself. He is my King, and I await His second coming with hope.

Until He comes again, He has sent His Spirit to live in us. The Spirit lovingly inclines my heart back toward God, and drives me to participate in God's mission of redeeming the world.

Because of Jesus Christ, I belong to the People of God through whom God has chosen to make God's self known to the world. The Church is called to be the best approximation of the Kingdom of God to the world, exhibited by grace, truth, and love. This community of believers also participates in the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, both of which are peculiar and defining acts of God's People.

I submit to the Holy Scriptures, which, next to Christ, are God's most definitive revelation of God's self to humanity. I trust that Scripture is unique in its divine inspiration and, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, wholly trustworthy in its message, and has no equal. Scripture has proven unique in my life in its ability to comfort and confront.

Many years ago I accepted Christ's invitation into a new life in Him. I continue to be shaped by God's persevering grace, and hope in God's work to make me obedient, prayerful, grateful, and loving. I trust that, at the conclusion of my life, God will bring me into eternal life with the Triune God and all the saints.

KRISTI CLICK

I believe in a loving triune God- one God in three persons, three persons united in one. God's relationship with God's self serves as a model for us. We are to exist with each other in relationships of mutual love and trust. We are to be other-affirming, community building people- self-sharing in a non-hierarchical community with no subordination, and no domineering power.

I believe that God is the maker of Heaven and Earth. God created everything out of nothing, brought light in to darkness- and called it good. God continues to create and is powerfully above creation, but is also lovingly present and at work in it.

I believe that in creation, God fashioned humankind in God's image. God created everyone equally in God's image- male and female of every race and people- and calls us to live as one community with and for each other.

Sadly, we denied our created identity. In our brokenness and sin, we practice self-interest and participate in systems of injustice. We turn away from God and one another, and from God's vision of a just world.

Loving us still, and full of compassion, God entered in to our broken world by dwelling among us in the person of Jesus Christ. In a world of political unrest, injustice, poverty, hunger, hatred, fear, and jealousy, God-with-us, the Living Word, proclaimed the Good News, healed the sick, and taught humanity how to love and be in relationship with God and one another. Jesus' ministry revealed the fullness of God's love.

But we rejected God's gift of grace and put Christ to death on a cross. Here, Jesus experienced full humanity by going to the depths of human suffering. But once again, God refused to let brokenness triumph. In the empty tomb and the resurrection of Jesus, our Redeemer conquered death and restored us to right relationship – reconciling us to God and each other. This saving grace of God is stronger than sin's claim on human life. We can do nothing to earn or deserve this grace- we can only respond with thanksgiving. Sin and death do not have the last word.

I believe that through the gift of the Holy Spirit, God continues to reach out and call us to relationship with God and one another. As One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic, the Church is a body that is sent out in to the world- not to be served, but to serve. With a mission modeled after Christ's life, the Church is called to seek God's will and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, engage in ministry and participate in God's mission of justice and redemption.

I believe that scripture is the authoritative word of God written- a testimony of people's experiences with God, shaped by the culture, context, and witness to God's self-revelation to humanity and creation. I believe that God's word is spoken to God's church today where the Scriptures are faithfully preached and attentively read in dependence on the illumination of the Holy Spirit and with readiness to receive their truth and direction.

I believe the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper to be instituted by God and commanded by Christ. As signs of the real presence and power of Christ in the Church and symbols of God's actions, sacraments seal believers into redemption, renew our identity as people of God, and mark us for service.

I believe that nothing can separate us from the love of God. The same power present in the resurrection of Jesus Christ is at work today through the Holy Spirit and will bring to pass God's ultimate reign. The God who knew us before we were born and knit us together, who dwelled among us in human form, and who sustains us through the Holy Spirit will be present with us until we experience full communion with the Triune God.

Report of the General Council

July 19, 2014

F

1. Actions taken on behalf of the presbytery:
 - a. A letter was sent to Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, on April 15, 2014, requesting assistance from the Office of the General Assembly to respond to the messages being disseminated to congregations about the PC(U.S.A.). The letter and its response can be found on pages 36-40.
 - b. Approved “That the presbytery engage the legal services of Vinson & Elkins to represent the presbytery in the matters of Houston, First Presbyterian Church, and Houston, Windwood Presbyterian Church.” The amendment was approved. The motion as written now reads: “That the presbytery engage the legal services of Vinson & Elkins to represent the presbytery in the matters of Houston, First Presbyterian Church and Houston, Windwood Presbyterian Church. Should Vinson & Elkins not be able to represent us, that Laurey Murphy, Lynn Hargrove, and Mike Cole be empowered to find other legal representation.”
Vinson & Elkins was unable to represent us. We have engaged the legal firm of Schiffer Odom Hicks & Johnson for the litigation with Houston, First.
2. For information:
 - a. At its meeting on July 7, 2013, the General Council approved a document entitled, “General Council Recommendations on Approval and Amendment of the Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure.” This document appears on page 41.
 - b. Reports of our litigation with Houston, Windwood and Houston, First are found on pages 79-83.
 - c. The Synod of the Sun granted the Presbytery of New Covenant \$3500 to be used for people from across the synod to attend our annual Church Officer Enrichment event which will be held on January 31, 2015, at ChristChurch, Bellaire.
3. Items being brought to the presbytery for action:
 - a. First Reading of the proposed revisions to the Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure
 1. Rationale for Revisions to the Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure (p. 44-49)
 2. The Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure with revision (p. 50-65)
 3. The current Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure (p. 66-78)



PRESBYTERY OF NEW COVENANT

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

Growing congregations that passionately engage their community to make disciples.

Mike Cole
General Presbyter

Mary Marcotte
*Associate General
Presbyter*

Lynn Hargrove
Stated Clerk

T. Stewart Coffman
*General Presbyter
Emeritus*

April 15, 2014

Rev. Grady Parsons
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly
Office of the General Assembly
Presbyterian Church in the United States of America
100 Witherspoon Street
Louisville, KY 40202

Dear Rev. Parsons:

We are writing on behalf of the General Council of New Covenant Presbytery. As you are no doubt aware, our presbytery (like many others) has been going through a very difficult process of facing challenges from congregations seeking to leave the P.C.(USA). In 2012, New Covenant adopted a gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure. Since that time, some seven churches have gone through the process with six of them leaving the denomination. This process has been painful, yet we have frequently found God's grace in how it has proceeded.

Our experience with this process has brought us into closer contact with some of the most disaffected and alienated members of our denomination. As one might expect, there is much anger and indignation expressed, along with some heartfelt theological disputes. Among the things that we have found is that many of the people (both congregation members and clergy) do not understand the full history of the issues they are debating. Many members (even Ruling Elders leading the charge to leave) are not life-long Presbyterians and do not have a deep understanding of either Reformed theological issues, the polity of the P.C.(USA) (except at a *de jure* level), the history of the church, or the debates and struggles that have brought us to this point. Indeed, we have encountered inaccurate information being disseminated as facts, incorrect memories of past debates, and failure to appreciate the long-held position of the denomination that good people may disagree about many things of which we have but limited insight into God's will without assuming malice or sin on the part of others.

It is our experience that there is not a single issue that underlies the decision to leave the P.C.(USA). Occasionally it results from long-standing wounds between a church or a particular pastor and a presbytery; it may be at root about power and finances; sometimes it is about deeply held theological beliefs; but all too often it is about a failure to understand each other and our shared journey into the 21st century. This dearth of understanding opens doors for those who seek to lead congregations away by marketing half-truths, fanning misconceptions, and re-interpreting history falsely.

It is from these and other learnings that this letter arises. We feel a strong need for assistance from the Office of the General Assembly in responding to the messages, both formal and informal, being disseminated to congregations. It is our belief that we need both to correct misinformation and to advocate affirmatively for the unity of the denomination. The P.C.(USA) has an amazing history of service, mission, and rigorous theological thinking. But we need help in telling this story and responding to criticisms effectively. We recognize that OGA has much on its plate, but it is our judgment that it is essential for the denomination to tell our story and to help conflicted Presbyterians make informed and meaningful decisions.

We call upon the OGA to develop an extensive packet of materials in multi-media format to assist in the advocacy for the P.C.(USA). At this point we are quite sure that you know the issues that are arising (while often triggered by ordination standards, these issues are much broader and deeper), but if there is any doubt, we can certainly send materials from some of our past experiences that would identify them for you. We would like to see something with the breadth, depth, and integration of educational curricula as the foundation for these materials, not single issue papers. These materials

1110 Lovett Boulevard • Houston, Texas 77006-3824 • 713-526-2585 • 713-526-8814, Fax •
www.pbbyofnewcovenant.org

need to be founded in Scriptural and theological authority, but easily accessible by lay members of congregations. Surely, some of these materials already exist in some form that could be re-purposed for this effort. On the other hand, it is our belief that we have not done enough collectively as a denomination to advocate for remaining together. Thus, many of these materials may need to be developed anew and vetted.

We envision a library of integrated materials covering the range of issues that have arisen in this and other presbyteries that carefully present the factual situation, an accurate history, and a clear rationale for why the disparate parts of this great denomination should continue on the path together, trusting in God to lead us irascible, irrational, and egotistical people where God wants us to be. We believe that these materials should highlight the vision of the church "reformed, always being reformed" as a way of illustrating the many changes to which faithful Presbyterians have adapted since the Reformation. We think that the church should use all of the considerable knowledge and technology that are now available to make this message strong, persuasive, and available to all Presbyterians.

The message of such materials may be perceived by some as defensive, and to some extent they must be for in some ways we have been attacked. But the primary message should be the vibrant, rich story and mission that has underlain Presbyterianism and the Presbyterian Church for these many centuries. We believe that the unique vision and gift of our perspective on the reformed theological worldview has and continues to serve us and the kingdom well. For all of our fractiousness, the P.C.(USA) has and continues to witness to a hurting world, to minister to people in need, and to spread the good news of the gospel of grace in Jesus Christ.

As a final note, members of New Covenant who will serve as GA Commissioners this year have brought to our attention that there does not appear to be any group, panel, or other venue for discussing these issues at the meeting of the General Assembly. It would seem that there should be structured opportunities for Commissioners from across the country to share concerns, explore options for responding to those seeking to leave, develop responses to their concerns, and become more informed about the history and development of our current polity and the Biblical and theological support for it. The positions about which many church members are concerned did not arise in a vacuum, but rather reflect the prayerful and sincere judgments of many people across many meetings of GA and of the deliberations of the presbyteries which ratified them. Should not the GA meeting include a time and venue for discussing how to address the (often heartfelt) concerns raised by those who come to believe that the "church has left them behind," as we have been told so many times? Surely, the church has been conflicted in the past, and yes, sometimes we have separated, but must we continue to repeat this pattern of splintering? Haven't we learned some things that will help us move forward together? There are many opportunities planned at the GA meeting to address issues that continue to divide us and which may lead to more splintering; shouldn't we make time for finding better ways to explain the positions already taken, correct the historical record, and respond to unwarranted calumnies?

Rev. Parsons, we urge you and the OGA to give consideration to this request. The time is short; we, as do other presbyteries, still have churches in the process of seeking dismissal. We believe that this effort will aid us in responding effectively to those who falsely cast this denomination in an unfavorable light. While the church certainly will not always make correct decisions, we believe that together we come closer to discerning God's will and deciding rightly than we can separately. Help us in communicating our optimism and commitment to those who feel conflicted and unheard before they are led away from us.

Thank you for your support and prayers.

In Christ,

Katie Cummings *Mary Herlihy* *Jody Harrington*
Gayle J. Jones *Mike Cole* *L. Merton McPhail* *Shelley Hernandez*
Jennifer K Selzer *Jane Larkin*
Jill S-H *Mary Marcotte* *John J. Moffett* *Julia Ann Moffett*
Sharon Carey
Sharon Carey *Lanny Murphy*
The Members of General Council of the Presbytery of New Covenant



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

May 5, 2014

Lynn Hargrove, Stated Clerk
Presbytery of New Covenant
1110 Loyett Boulevard
Houston, Texas 77006-3824

Dear Lynn:

I received your letter of April 15. I read it as a letter from people who have a deep love for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and find themselves in an uneven battle with its' critics. The Office of the General Assembly spends much of every day in conversation with presbyteries, congregations and individuals who are in similar circumstances.

In my first congregation, I was faced with the same struggle. Right after reunion a small determined group worked to take the congregation into the Presbyterian Church of America. People who I had worshipped with, cared for, baptized, and journeyed through all sorts of travails suddenly doubled my faith in Jesus Christ. Every aspect of my young family's life was put under suspicion. In the end they did not prevail, but they did leave many people with spiritual scars.

We have tried to prepare resources as time and funds permit. They range from some basic "this is what Presbyterians believe" to comparison charts of the PC(USA) with the EPC and ECO. I will try to list as many as I can for you with this letter. I make no attempt to say they are sufficient. The local context is very important in every congregation. Usually the most persuasive people are the other Presbyterians in the area.

Your General Assembly commissioners will not find a formal discussion time on the subject of congregations leaving the PC(USA). However, it is our context and will flavor every debate. Perhaps in the future the Presbytery of New Covenant could bring forth an overture that would create the kind of forum you are seeking.

I am most grateful for your letter and your concerns. They are also mine. Please continue to pray for your church as I continue to pray for you.

Yours in Christ,

Gradye Parsons
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Resources for Congregations and Presbyteries in Discernment (Underlined are Links)

<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/pcusa-comparison-chart/>

<http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/why-i-belong/>

Constitutional Musing: Misrepresentations about the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Church Conflict and Negotiation

History of Presbyterians in Times of Controversy and Conflict

The history of conflict in our church teaches us many lessons today. Below you will find various historical resources that will afford an opportunity for us to learn from the past so that we may practice wisdom in the present.

- [All in the Family: Conflict, Disagreement, Division, Schism, and Reconciliation within the American Presbyterian Church by Fred Heuser \(PDF\)](#)
- [Historical Resources Regarding Presbyterians in Times of Conflict](#)
- [Presbyterian Family Connections](#)

Resources for Negotiation

Negotiation has important Biblical and practical foundations as a means of addressing and resolving conflict in church environments. Many of these resources were developed for the conference: [The Spiritual and Practical Aspects of Negotiation of Church Conflict](#). Negotiation is defined as the process of coming to joint or mutual agreement; the process of joint or mutual problem-solving. The resources below are intended to help you address questions like: How can we negotiate conflict and work through differences with our brothers and sisters? What are some of the different models of negotiation? What are some of the key biblical principles to help me understand negotiation? How does negotiation relate to other methods of dispute resolution, such as mediation, arbitration, litigation, or self-help? How do we avoid zero-sum and us vs. them dynamics? What are ways to avoid escalating conflict? How does framing and reframing relate to negotiation? What spiritual perspectives and practices are helpful to understanding and preparing for negotiation? What issues should we be mindful of in negotiating property disputes? What other resources are available to understanding and practicing negotiation?

- [Cultivating Fruitful Conversation](#)
- [Days Pass](#)
- [Discerning God's Vision Together](#)
- [The Embodiment of Faith Within Church Structures and Processes](#)
- [Four Models for Sacred Reading](#)
- [The Group Lectio Process](#)
- [Introduction to Negotiation](#)
- [Lectio and Centering Prayer for Conflict](#)
- [Liturgical Resources for Church Conflict and Dismissal](#)
- [Lectio Divina for Community Prayer](#)
- [Liturgical Resources for Times When Churches are Leaving a Denomination](#)

- [Methods of the Examination of Conscience](#)
- [A Missional Hermeneutic For Approaching the Bible](#)
- [Negotiation Resources - Books](#)
- [Negotiation Resources](#)
- [Prayers of Ignatius of Loyola](#)
- [Spiritual Practices and Perspectives of Negotiation - Prayer](#)
- [Spiritual Practices and Perspectives of Negotiation Scripture, Confessions and Polity](#)
- [Skillful Discussion](#)
- [The Spiritual Discipline and Art of Christian Listening](#)
- [Win-Lose Struggles and Their Costs](#)

Other Resources on Church Conflict

- [To Strengthen Christ's Body: Tools for Talking about Tough Issues](#)
- [PC\(USA\) Building Unity and Community](#)

Video

Biblical Authority and Interpretation: A Presbyterian Perspective

Powerpoint

The Presbyterian Church Building Unity and Community (available from OGA)

From Lynn Hargrove and Mike Cole:

In addition to this list of resources sent by Gradye Parsons, we are working with our counterparts in our synod and across the nation gathering resource documents. These can be found on our presbytery website in the file cabinet.

We have been sharing our resources with other presbyteries as they work with their own discernment processes, as we continue living in these interesting times in our lives together.

General Council Recommendation on Approval and Amendment of the Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure

The Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure specifies the following procedure for amending:

“This Procedure shall be effective after a preliminary reading/discussion of the Procedure at a Presbytery meeting and ratification by a majority of those voting at a subsequent Presbytery meeting. Amendments to the Procedure are in order at the Presbytery meeting where the vote takes place.

Subsequent to the adoption of this Procedure, it may only be amended or rescinded by the same procedure stated above: after a preliminary reading/discussion of the Procedure at a Presbytery meeting and ratification by a majority of those voting at a subsequent Presbytery meeting.

The Procedure in effect on the date of the covenant agreement between the session and the Presbytery shall remain in effect throughout the process for that particular congregation even if the Procedure is amended or rescinded by the Presbytery during the process.”

General Council recommends the following procedure for considering amendments suggested by General Council:

The only “amendments” on the floor for the first reading and discussion will be the changes proposed by the General Council. The presbytery will have four months to reflect on the proposed revisions and suggest additional amendments as NEW BUSINESS (subject to the 4 day rule) prior to the second reading.

Rationale: General Council is proposing substantive amendments based upon our collective experience with eight churches that have gone through the Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure. The first reading will be to help the presbytery understand the changes proposed. The four months between the first reading and the second reading is to allow time for members of the presbyter to consider the proposed changes and offer other amendments.

Rationale for Revisions to the Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure

In 2011, the Presbytery of New Covenant undertook a new approach to dealing with congregations expressing a desire to depart from the PC(U.S.A.) over matters of polity and theology. Historically, the Presbytery had faithfully followed the requirements of the Book of Order, applying the “Trust Clause” (G-4.02.3), appointing Administrative Commissions, and seeking to discern the “true church” composed of members who would undertake to continue to function as a congregation and maintain the church property. Experience demonstrated that this approach was increasingly ineffective. Too often we were left with broken churches composed of congregations unable to afford the costs to meet financial obligations and maintain the property. More significantly, these situations were fraught with anger, suspicion, and hostility, and parting was painful and left deep personal and corporate scars. The process we followed, while fair, seemed little focused on finding reconciliation in our church family and too focused on the process itself. It seemed foolish to continue to follow this same path, while expecting the results to change. Moreover, voices within the larger church began calling for a more gracious way to deal with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

To try to address this situation, General Council appointed a writing team to design a process that would hopefully change the focus from one of “rule-following” to one of “God-discernment.” We Presbyterians have always contended that we are better able to hear and understand God’s will for us when we meet and pray together, and we sought to design a process that would place the focus on doing exactly that – listening for God’s will and discerning the path He desires for congregations and for this Presbytery. The result of this quest was the Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure that was adopted by this Presbytery after much consideration, discussion, and prayer.

Now, two and a half years later, eight congregations in this Presbytery have gone through the procedure with seven of them being dismissed to other reformed bodies. We have learned from these experiences. There are parts of the process as it was originally designed that have worked as intended and others that deserve improvement. In particular, the initial intent of the process was to foster reconciliation first, with dismissal being an undesired, second-best outcome. This outcome has not been achieved. It was not the intention of the writing team, the General Council, or we believe this Presbytery that this process simply be a *pro forma* mechanism for a congregation to leave our fellowship with their property. The call and intention for reconciliation was real, substantive, and central to this procedure. We do not invite our brothers and sisters to leave; we want to pray and reason together to find a way to disagree and remain together. This vision has characterized the Presbyterian Church in this country since its inception.

In addition, a variety of other changes have taken place in the larger church and in the secular world around us that impel us to make revisions in how the procedure is to work if it is to achieve its intended goals. Some of these changes have rendered parts of our procedure moot, and others require modifications in order to survive scrutiny even within the PC(U.S.A.). In particular, two cases decided by the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission require us to make corrections in

the process in order to be in compliance with ecclesiastical law as it now stands. Additionally, the Texas Supreme Court in two cases involving the Episcopal Church has reinterpreted previous appellate rulings on matters of property in ecclesiastical cases so that it is no longer clear to what extent the “Trust Clause” in the Book of Order will be enforced by state courts in Texas. The law in this state is still in flux with litigation in several venues still pending, including two involving this presbytery.

In the following, the major changes proposed for the procedure are described with the reasoning behind them. There are also a variety of minor changes that seek to improve the language to make the procedure clearer and easier to use that will not be discussed.

Page 1-2. Prologue, ll. 23-52

The original procedure envisioned the possibility that other creative options might be developed as alternatives to dismissal in order to foster reconciliation. This hope has not been realized and some of the options listed as examples are no longer viable considerations. Accordingly, this section has been removed in its entirety.

Page 3, Procedure, ll. 71-75

The proposed change in language here is intended to make it clear that the act of considering and even seeking dismissal to another reformed body does not place Teaching or Ruling Elders in violation of ordination vows to maintain the unity of the church.

Page 4, Procedure, ll. 100-101

In order to clarify the intent of the original document, regarding the time frames for completion of the process, the permissive *should* is proposed to be changed to the required *shall* indicating that we do not think it reasonable that the discernment process as envisioned for a decision of such magnitude can be completed in less than six months. Additionally, question has arisen about when “the clock starts,” so we have added language to clarify when the expected and required timeframe will begin.

Page 4, Procedure, ll. 107-111

Experience with the original process indicated that greater effort and emphasis needed to be placed on the hope and process of reconciliation if that were at all possible. Moreover, the GAPJC in *Presbytery of New York City (Appellant/Respondent) v. Ruling Elder Mildred McGee, et al. (Appellees/Complainants)* (Remedial Case 221-08, Decision and Order, May 4, 2014), found fault with the dismissal procedure of New York City Presbytery for failing to address reconciliation adequately. The proposed language in this paragraph is intended to make clear the importance we attach to pursuing reconciliation and that that effort should start prior to entering the formal discernment process and should continue throughout.

Pages 4-5, Procedure, ll. 120-136

Although it is our intention that we will extend all fairness and graciousness to our brothers and sisters who are in contention with the Presbytery and the denomination, it must be clear that the Presbytery does not and cannot stand as an outside observer and facilitator of this process. The Presbytery as a Council of the PC(U.S.A.) has responsibilities that cannot be ignored. The Discernment Team appointed by Presbytery and the Session can be objective and focused on the equity and consistency of the process; the Presbytery cannot. Until and unless there are changes (many) to the Book of Order, the Presbytery must be cognizant of its fiduciary, polity, and ecclesiastical legal responsibilities. The addition of this section seeks to clarify those facts and to require provision of relevant information to allow the Presbytery to fulfill those obligations. Despite contentions to the contrary and uncertainty about future state laws and court rulings, it needs to be clear that the “Trust Clause” of the Book of Order continues to bind the Presbytery in the eyes of church judicial processes and may play a role in any review by higher Councils or other authorities such as the GAPJC in reviewing this Presbytery’s actions in implementing this Procedure.

Page 5, Procedure, ll. 138-142

This paragraph has been added to clarify the original intention of the Procedure, which had been also part of the interpretation provided to previous Discernment Teams, that the Team is responsible for developing and approving the details of the discernment process to be used by the particular congregation. It has been our experience that appropriate processes are likely to differ across different congregations, so no template or required process has been provided. The substantive change incorporated in this paragraph is to require that the Team meet at least twice before developing a discernment process. That provision is included to be consistent with the intent noted above to increase the emphasis on reconciliation as the primary and initial purpose of the process with dismissal to be considered only later when necessary.

Page 5, Procedure, ll. 144-149

There are two changes proposed in this paragraph. Both reflect learnings from the experience that we have had with creating Discernment Teams. The first change addresses situations in which the church does not have an installed pastor and/or other staff. In some cases there simply was no one to fulfill the roles previously demanded by the Procedure. The second change reflects the need to have a facilitator in place before the first meeting of the Discernment Team, rather than being selected at the first meeting. The new provision calls for the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery to select the facilitator in consultation with the Discernment Team members who have already been selected by the session and the presbytery. To be consistent, the comment about the role of the facilitator (i.e., voice without vote) has been moved from the description of the first meeting to this paragraph.

Pages 5-6, ll. 151-187

Based on experiences reported by the eight Discernment Teams so far, it has become clear that some changes are needed in the structure and function of the five required meetings of the Teams. The first two meetings have been made more substantive, rather than limited simply to getting to know

one another. The essence of this substance is to allow the Team to begin immediately exploring the possibility and methods of reconciliation. In the third meeting the Team will focus on the discernment process and by the final meeting it will be prepared to make recommendations to the Session and the congregation. Note that the “Fifth” meeting has been changed to “Final” in recognition that the Teams are free to meet additional times as necessary to fulfill their responsibilities.

Page 6, Il. 191-193

Properly speaking, the purpose of the congregational meeting cannot be for the session to make a recommendation for dismissal. The purpose of the meeting is for the congregation to vote on a motion to request dismissal, as indicated by the proposed change.

Page 8, Guidelines for Restoration, Il. 203-210

Although at this time, the situation considered here has not occurred, this change is proposed to emphasize again the importance of the reconciliation process and to allow time for it to occur. To mark the change in role, the Discernment Team is to be renamed and formally assigned new tasks, including consultation with the session.

Page 8, Guidelines for Restoration, Il. 212-214

Preparation of a covenant of reaffirmation seems to be appropriately the role of the session in consultation with the Reconciliation Team. This proposed language is intended to make clear that the source of the covenant should be primarily the session’s responsibility.

Page 8, Guidelines for Restoration, I. 215

If a session has advocated for dismissal and the congregation votes to remain in the PC (U.S.A.), the presbytery may be a resource for helping internal reconciliation between the session and the congregation. At the very least, the presbytery does have a responsibility for the health and spiritual welfare of the congregation and should be consulted by the session on plans for reconciliation.

Page 8, Guidelines for Restoration, Il. 223-224

Clearly, this change simply reminds us of Paul’s call of the church to unity.

Page 9, Procedure for Seeking Dismissal, Il. 232-236

This proposed addition is intended to clarify the role of the Discernment Team once a session has voted to call a congregational meeting.

Page 9, Procedure for Seeking Dismissal, Il. 261-262

Again, recent decisions within the ecclesiastical courts of the PC(U.S.A.), have clarified that presbyteries may not delegate decisions for dismissal to an automatic process or to a subordinate Council. To this point, we have addressed this issue by asking the presbytery to vote on two motions regarding each dismissal brought before it. The first motion is to approve that the Procedure has been followed and completed as required; the second is to officially dismiss the congregation to a specified Reformed body. However, the original procedure did not explicitly specify a vote of the presbytery to consummate the action. This proposed change simply makes explicit what we have already been doing.

Pages 9-10, Procedure for Seeking Dismissal, Il. 264-301

The changes proposed for this section seek to balance two concerns that have arisen from experience and from cases heard in ecclesiastical courts. In a case decided by the GAPJC involving the Presbytery of San Francisco (*Tom, et al., v. The Presbytery of San Francisco*, Remedial Case 221-03, 2012), the fiduciary responsibility of a presbytery was highlighted. While presbyteries should be given deference in deciding financial matters, they must still consider their overall responsibility to the denomination under the requirements of the Book of Order. Additionally, our experiences in dealing with dismissals under this Procedure have underscored the need for sessions (and ultimately, congregations) to have some level of certainty about costs in order to fulfill their own due diligence responsibilities as they consider entering into this Procedure. In trying to balance these issues, the proposed language continues to acknowledge that both the presbytery and the denomination have financial interests in the property held by congregations under the “Trust Clause” and that departing congregations will be expected to respond to these. However, the previous language regarding funding NCD for a minority wishing to remain in the PC(U.S.A.), which left sessions trying to anticipate costs that were difficult to estimate, has been removed in favor of the combination of the original formula regarding a per member cost and a tithe of the average of two years of the congregation’s operating budget. The proposed provisions that appear in lines 298-301 make the funding of any NCD the responsibility of the presbytery, using the funds provided under the Procedure and/or other funds the presbytery may decide to make available.

Page 10, Procedure for Seeking Dismissal, Il. 303-309

These two numbered paragraphs clarify the responsibilities of both the presbytery and the congregation in completing the actions required to finalize the dismissal following approval by presbytery. One of these paragraphs (9), with minor changes, has been moved forward from a point later in the document.

Page 10, Procedure for Seeking Dismissal, footnote

Given changes noted above, this footnote is no longer relevant.

Page 11, Procedure for Seeking Dismissal, Il. 316-317

In some cases, other individuals beyond General Council members may be more appropriate representatives for the purposes of this final worship service. For example, there may be members of

the presbytery who have long-standing relationships with the congregation or who worked closely with them as part of the Discernment Team who should rightly be included in planning this service.

Page 11, Procedure for Seeking Dismissal, ll. 324-326

A modified version of this paragraph appears earlier at line 303.

Page 11, Procedure for Seeking Dismissal, ll. 335-341

The proposed changes in these lines bring the language into compliance with the new Form of Government. Additionally, the language included in the original contained unnecessary detail that may be confusing and was not exhaustive, leading to still further confusion.

Page 13, Covenant Agreement

For convenience, this entire page has been moved to the end of the document.

Page 16, Covenant Agreement

Since the Procedure covers many points besides discernment, the proposed change simplifies the language to minimize the opportunities for confusion or disagreement.

Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure

PROLOGUE

The vision of the Presbytery of New Covenant is to *Grow congregations that passionately engage their community to make disciples*. Our mission is to -

- *Confess Jesus Christ as Lord*
- *Connect one another in ministry*
- *Challenge one another for mission.*

The Presbytery of New Covenant seeks to facilitate worship, mission, and other shared ministries by engaging all of the 106 churches in our bounds to be united in carrying out our vision and mission. We believe The Mission of God as expressed in the Great Ends of the Church is greater than the PC (U.S.A.).

Recognizing that polity changes effected by the passage of Amendment 10A and the new Form of Government have caused some congregations to reconsider their connection with the PC (U.S.A.), the Presbytery has adopted a Procedure for Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal. Nonetheless, a fundamental understanding from our Presbyterian heritage is one of connection rather than division. We believe that we discern the will of God more clearly in any particular time and place when we are in communion with each other than when we are separated. However, the Presbytery acknowledges that the particular forms of communion may shift over time, always reforming to better serve the mission of our Lord, Christ Jesus.

Ordination vows for all ordained persons include the following: "Will you seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?" To this end, we wish to remain open to imagining and considering a variety of options that may serve both our connection and our differences. Below is listed a sampling of potential options that congregations and the Presbytery could prayerfully consider to foster our unity. Some of these would require greater effort and agreement from other Councils of the church; some are more readily available. This necessarily incomplete listing is not intended to reflect recommendations of the Presbytery; rather it is intended to indicate the breadth of options open to us and to encourage expanded dialogue as we open ourselves to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

OPTIONAL RESPONSES:

1. Dual-committee/evangelical cluster—establish two Committees on Ministry and two Committees on Preparation for Ministry based on shared understanding of scripture, mission priorities and the Presbytery's record in lay leader training, New Church Development and innovative mission projects. An alternative would be to lodge the responsibilities of COM and CPM in smaller affinity-based clusters.
2. Union congregations—PC (U.S.A.) congregations could unite with other Reformed Congregations (Cumberland, Evangelical Presbyterian Church, etc.) with the approval of both Councils (presbyteries) and, where polity requirements were in conflict, the Union agreement would indicate which polity to follow.

3. ~~Union Presbyteries – PC (U.S.A.) presbyteries could unite with other Reformed Councils (Cumberland, Evangelical Presbyterian Church, etc.) with the approval of Councils (presbyteries, synods and General Assembly) and, where polity requirements were in conflict, the Union agreement would indicate which polity to follow.~~
4. ~~Gracious Reconciliation – see attached Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure~~
5. ~~Gracious Dismissal – see attached Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure~~
6. ~~Alternative Dismissal Process – see attached Alternative Process for dismissal to a Reformed Body~~
7. ~~Non-geographic Presbytery – not in the power of Presbytery of New Covenant, but the presbytery could establish a process to dismiss congregations to a non-geographic Presbytery and advocate for that option with Office of General Assembly.~~

Final Version

Presbytery of New Covenant Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure

The Presbytery of New Covenant is committed to pursuing reconciliation with pastors, Sessions, and congregations who are considering dismissal from the denomination. Whether that reconciliation takes the form of dismissal, mutually accepted re-commitment to the Presbytery-congregational relationship, or something in-between, it is the will of this Presbytery to create a gracious context and process in which the will of God is sought for the life, ministry, and calling of the particular congregation. All congregations of this Presbytery are invited to commit to this broad understanding of reconciliation with a graciousness befitting those who claim Jesus as Lord.

The Presbytery and congregations will be continually guided by these three principles:

1. The Mission of God as expressed in the Great Ends of the Church is greater than the PC (U.S.A.). Therefore, we affirm that a congregation seeking dismissal to another Reformed Body does not diminish the unity of the one Church of Jesus Christ ~~should Presbytery dismiss a congregation to another Reformed body, the unity of the one Church of Jesus Christ has not been diminished.~~ (F-1.0302 and F-1.0304)
2. The exercise of “mutual forbearance” is of utmost importance in our process. Therefore, all will treat each other with respect regardless of theological and ecclesiological differences.
3. We will pray and work for fairness to all parties in our decisions.

It is the Presbytery’s belief that in adopting this Procedure congregations who faithfully follow it as a way of discerning if God would have them affiliate with another Reformed denomination are not engaged in schism and that therefore the Presbytery’s understanding is that G-4.0207 (Property of a Church in Schism) does not apply to congregations faithfully following this process.

If a Session chooses not to follow this Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal process or abandons these processes before completion, then the “Alternative Process for a Church Seeking Dismissal from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” will apply.

In all matters relating to this subject, discerning answers to the following three questions will be deemed paramount:

1. Is God leading this particular congregation to restore fellowship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), or to seek dismissal from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?
2. If God is leading this congregation toward restoration of fellowship with the Presbyterian Church (USA), how can that be accomplished in a way that honors Jesus Christ and strengthens both the congregation and the Presbytery?

3. If God is leading this congregation to seek dismissal from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), how can that be accomplished in a way that honors Jesus Christ and strengthens both the congregation and the Presbytery?

The Presbytery asks that any Session seeking or considering dismissal from the denomination to covenant with the Presbytery to enter into this defined process of mutual discernment through the formation of a Discernment Team from the Presbytery and the local congregation (see "Discernment Process" below). As described below, this process ~~should~~ **shall** take no less than six months and no more than two years **from the date of the congregational vote to enter the Discernment Procedure**. At the conclusion of the process, the Discernment Team will report and make recommendations to both the church and the Presbytery.

DISCERNMENT PROCEDURE

Because reconciliation is the desired outcome of any disagreement between the congregation and the Presbytery, informal public conversations between the congregation and the Presbytery are encouraged prior to entering the Discernment Procedure to facilitate mutual understanding and reconciliation. Such meetings might take the form of town hall presentations, Sunday School classes, meetings of Presbytery representatives with the Session and/or congregation, or other appropriate venues.

~~However, after such conversations a~~ Session wishing to initiate ~~this a formal~~ process shall put the matter to a vote. If at a duly noticed meeting with appropriate quorum, the Session votes by two-thirds majority to initiate the discernment process, the Clerk of Session shall contact the Presbytery office and inform the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of this desire. The Session shall then call a congregational meeting for the purpose of approving participation in the discernment process. At that meeting, the congregation shall vote to establish a quorum of 30% for any future meeting to vote on requesting dismissal from the PC (U.S.A.) If approved, the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery and the Clerk of Session (or their designated representative) will sign a Covenant Agreement (see below) and may then select member representatives for the Discernment Team.

In order to fulfill the constitutional responsibility of the Presbytery under the Book of Order, of the Presbytery of New Covenant understands that church property is held in trust for the PC(U.S.A.) G-4.0203, and recognizes that the use of the property is for the benefit of PC(U.S.A.). Accordingly, the General Presbyter will arrange for a financial evaluation to determine the congregation's ability to abide by the financial terms of this Procedure. This review is also performed to provide an "individual assessment and valuation of the church's unique situation, finances, history, spiritual needs and financial needs." (*Reference Tom, et al., v. The Presbytery of San Francisco, Remedial Case 221-03, 2012*). When the congregation votes to enter the Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure, the Session shall provide as soon as possible the following items to the General Presbyter:

- The Operating Budget as of the date of the congregational meeting on which the congregation voted to enter the Procedure

- The Assessed value of the property, including land
- The insured value of the property, including all assets
- Existing liens on the property
- Outstanding loans of the congregation
- Current financial statement – audited income statement and balance sheet of the congregation
- Insofar as practical, history of property acquisition and values
- The membership email and mail address list

After meeting at least twice, the Discernment Team will create or approve a process of prayer and discernment to listen to the concerns, sensitivities and questions of congregation members. The Discernment Team is responsible for assuring that any such process shall provide equal opportunity for all viewpoints to be brought before the congregation and for all congregation members to have opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns.

The Discernment Team shall consist of four representatives from the church and four representatives from the Presbytery. The Session of the congregation shall select the representatives from the church, **two of whom shall be from the Session (Ruling Elder and Teaching Elder if possible, or two Ruling Elders)**, ~~one from the church-staff, one from the session~~ and two at large active members of the congregation. The General Council shall select two Ruling Elders and two Teaching Elders from the Presbytery. **The Stated Clerk of the Presbytery shall select a facilitator in consultation with the Discernment Team members. The facilitator shall not be one of the eight members of the Discernment Team and shall have voice but not vote during the discernment process.** The Discernment Team shall covenant to meet together a minimum of five times.

First Meeting

The first meeting of the Discernment Team shall be convened by the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery (or the Clerk's designated representative) to review this Procedure process and ~~select a facilitator. The facilitator shall not be one of the eight members of the Discernment Team and shall have voice but not vote during the discernment process.~~ The Discernment Team will engage in extended time of prayer and introductions **and share their faith stories, their understanding of the spiritual and theological issues at stake between the congregation and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and pray for God's guidance for reconciliation.** Following the first meeting, the Discernment Team will meet at least four more times. The expected content of the meetings is outlined below.

Second Meeting

~~The Discernment Team members will share their faith stories, their understanding of the spiritual and theological issues at stake between the congregation and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and pray for God's guidance.~~ The facilitator of the Discernment Team will guide a prayerful dialogue on foundational theological issues. The purpose of this discussion is to identify the extent of common theological and ecclesiastical ground between the congregation and the denomination as a basis for reconciliation. This meeting will **be primarily for dialogue** ~~be a listening and sharing session.~~

168

169 *Third Meeting*

170 The facilitator of the Discernment Team will guide a prayerful dialogue on foundational theological
171 issues. The purpose of this discussion is to determine how much common theological and ecclesiastical
172 ground exists between the congregation and the denomination. The Discernment Team will create or
173 approve a process of prayer and discernment to listen to the concerns, sensitivities and questions of
174 congregation members. Any such process shall assure that there is equal opportunity for all viewpoints
175 to be brought before the congregation and for all congregation members to have opportunity to voice
176 their opinions and concerns.

177 *Fourth Meeting*

178 The Discernment Team will oversee the process of prayer and discernment to be implemented by the
179 Session. The Discernment Team will address listen to the concerns, sensitivities and questions of
180 congregation members.

181 *Additional Meetings*

182 The content of additional meetings will be determined mutually by members of the Discernment Team.

183

184 *Fifth Final Meeting*

185 Upon completion of the listening prayer and discernment process and time committed to prayer, the
186 Discernment Team will prepare a report with recommendations to the Session and to the congregation in
187 one or more "town hall" meetings. the Discernment Team will address the concerns, sensitivities and
188 questions of congregation members.

189 If the Session determines the congregation is still called by God to remain in covenant relationship with the
190 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), both parties will work together to heal any broken relationships (see "Guidelines
191 for Restoration of Fellowship and Recommitment to Presbytery-Congregational Relationship" below).

192 If the Session votes to call a congregational meeting to vote on a request for dismissal recommend dismissal to
193 another Reformed body, the Session shall follow the "Procedure for Seeking Dismissal". These policies and
194 procedures shall take effect immediately upon approval by the Presbytery.¹

195 *Meetings After a call for a Congregation Vote*

¹ NOTE: If a congregation or its leadership preemptively files suit in a civil court against the Presbytery, the Presbytery of New Covenant will answer and defend the suit. If suit is filed, the Presbytery of New Covenant also reserves the right to apply the "Alternative Process for a Church Considering or Seeking Dismissal from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)." Likewise, if a congregation or its leadership abandons this Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure before completion, the Alternative Process for a Church Seeking Dismissal from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will apply.

196 The Discernment Team shall meet with the Session to ensure proper, fair and balanced communications during
197 the period between the call for a congregational vote and the vote. The Discernment Team shall report to the
198 Presbytery regarding the fairness of communications during this period.

199

Final Version

GUIDELINES FOR RESTORATION OF FELLOWSHIP AND RECOMMITMENT TO PRESBYTERY-CONGREGATIONAL RELATIONSHIP

If the Session or congregation determines that it is called into a continued or transformed relationship with the Presbytery of New Covenant, **In the event of a vote to remain in the PC(U.S.A.), the Session shall not seek another vote on dismissal for at least one year after the congregational vote to request dismissal.** The Discernment Team **will be renamed the Reconciliation Team and shall** create and conduct a process for continuation/transformation of fellowship and reaffirmation to of the Presbytery-congregational relationship. **In addition, it is appropriate for the Reconciliation Team to consult with the Session regarding reconciliation within the congregation. Among the tasks of the Reconciliation Team are:** The following are presented as minimal guidelines for marking and sealing that reaffirmation:

1. ~~The Discernment Team will assist~~ **Consulting with** the Session in writing a covenant of reaffirmation articulating the nature and specifics of the future relationship between the congregation, Presbytery and the PC (U.S.A.).
2. **Consulting with the Session in reconciling leadership and members.**
3. Conducting a public service of worship and reaffirmation to shared fellowship and ministry, with participation from Presbytery and congregation.
4. Sharing of story and testimony from members of the ~~Discernment~~ **Reconciliation** Team and congregation at the congregational and Presbytery level ~~(and beyond, if appropriate).~~
5. Blessing and commissioning of any ~~minority that~~ **congregants who** leaves the local congregation (to the extent possible), in the hope of maintaining **the unity of the Spirit in the** bonds of peace. *(Ephesians 4:3)*

PROCEDURE FOR SEEKING DISMISSAL

Upon completion of the discernment process described in the “Commitment to Reconciliation,” **if the Session calls a meeting of the congregation to vote on a motion to be dismissed to a particular Reformed Body, the Discernment Team will work with the Session to ensure the proper and fair implementation of the procedure outlined below:** ~~a session and congregation desiring to enter into the process of seeking dismissal shall follow this procedure:~~

1. The Session shall call for a meeting of the congregation. Advance notice for the meeting shall be by written letter to each member on the active roll of the congregation who is eligible to vote at the meeting, as well as through three Sunday worship announcements. The letter shall be mailed at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting date and shall include:
 - a. the motion from the Session to be dismissed to a particular Reformed body
 - b. a written statement from the Discernment Team majority and minority (if applicable)
 - c. the amount the congregation shall contribute to the Presbytery (see item #5 below).
 Public announcements of the congregational meeting shall be made at all worship services between the date of the call and the actual congregational meeting. Representatives of the Presbytery (which may include members of the Discernment Team, General Council, Stated Clerk of the Presbytery, General Presbyter, and Associate General Presbyters) shall also be invited to the meeting, with the right to address the body gathered.
2. Members eligible to vote at the congregational meeting shall be those listed on the roll of Active members of the church (G-1.0402) as of the date of the letter calling the congregational meeting. The quorum for the congregational meeting shall be the designated quorum of the congregation or 30%, whichever is higher.
3. All members present, as well as the representatives of Presbytery, shall have the right to speak. When the discussion is concluded, the vote shall be taken by written ballot. At least two-thirds of those present voting must vote in favor of requesting dismissal to another Reformed body in order for the proposal to pass.
4. If at least two-thirds of those voting request dismissal, the Presbytery shall agree **vote upon** ~~to the request for~~ dismissal, permitting the congregation to depart with all of its property intact.
5. Prior to a desired dismissal, the Session of the congregation shall enter into a legally **binding** contract on behalf of the congregation **regarding financial settlement**². Normally, this contract will provide that if dismissed, the church will contribute to the Presbytery a tithe (10%) of **at least the average of the current year and previous** two year’s operating budgets of the congregation as of the date of its entrance into the Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure. ~~The two year’s~~ **This** tithe may be payable as a lump sum or paid in quarterly payments over five (5) years. The first (or lump sum) payment shall be due upon the signing of all legal documents, which shall occur as soon as practical after the vote of the presbytery approving dismissal. **Additionally the congregation shall** ~~to~~ contribute to the Presbytery the greater of: the per member share of the current Presbytery budget² or the average of the congregation’s past three years’ Presbytery contributions. ~~These contributions will be contributed~~ **shall be calculated** on a declining scale over a five year period according to the following schedule:

² in 2011 ~~2014~~ the per member share of the Presbytery budget was \$36.53 ~~34.01~~

Year one – 100%
 Year two – 80%
 Year three – 60%
 Year four – 40%
 Year five – 20%
 Year six and beyond – 0%

The method, timing, and securing of this payment shall be negotiated.

6. The Presbytery recognizes that “the church” in a particular area is not its building or financial assets, but the people of the congregation. When the required majority votes to join another Reformed body, and when a minority of at least 10% vote to remain in the PC (U.S.A.), a separate meeting shall be convened at a separate time to discern interest, if any, in starting a PC (U.S.A.) congregation. If 25 or more members of the active membership sign a letter expressing intent to begin another PC (U.S.A.) congregation, the New Church Development committee of Presbytery, or its agent, shall determine if the leadership, mission, and resources exist to organize a new church. If the NCD Committee or its agent makes that determination, an amount of money at least equal to the insured value of the property minus loans, multiplied by the percentage of its active membership signing a petition to organize a new church, shall be made available for the new church development before dismissal of the majority with property.³

7. A congregation that is approved for dismissal may take its name with it.

8. If any members express a desire to start a PC (U.S.A.) congregation, the Presbytery’s committee responsible for evangelism and church growth shall determine if the leadership, mission, and resources exist to organize a new church. It shall be the responsibility of the Presbytery of New Covenant to support, encourage and provide resources for the establishment of a new church by a loyal minority.

9. A congregation being dismissed will be required to transfer the memberships of all those on the roll who request transfer to another congregation. The Session minutes and church register become the property of the Presbytery of New Covenant and will be delivered prior to all legal documents being signed.

10. When the Presbytery has approved the request for dismissal, all legal documents have been signed and payment(s) made, the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of New Covenant shall issue a letter of dismissal to the Reformed Body which is prepared to receive the congregation.

11. In the event that any congregation’s request for dismissal is approved under the terms of this Procedure, the Presbytery shall hold, in conjunction with the congregation, held a final worship service of commissioning, to celebrate our common life in Jesus Christ and to pray for the effectiveness and well-

³ The intent of this section is to help a minority of the congregation who wish to remain in the PC (U.S.A.) by undertaking and supporting the initiation of a new PC (U.S.A.) congregation. Given the commercial value of much church land is many times the value of the buildings, this minimum formula (which can be exceeded) gives members wishing to start a new PC (U.S.A.) congregation significant funds to do so and asks a departing congregation to make significant contribution without unrealistically burdening the departing congregation.

being of both the congregation and the Presbytery. Those departing the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will be commissioned by the Presbytery to further their work for the kingdom as they go forward in ministry. The service will be jointly planned by **representatives of the Presbytery of New Covenant** members of Presbytery's General Council and the Session, and all congregations of the Presbytery of New Covenant shall be invited.

12. A congregation being dismissed shall be required to remove the Presbytery of New Covenant from any outstanding loan guarantees and to pay off any loans outstanding to any entity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
13. ~~A congregation being dismissed will be required to take a roll of its membership as of the official date of dismissal, to transfer the memberships of all those on the roll who request transfer to another congregation, and to file all reports required by the Presbytery for statistical record keeping.~~
14. A congregation being dismissed will be required to work with the Presbyterian Board of Pensions to determine the effective date of the dismissal.
15. There are some practical considerations to be addressed, should a congregation be approved for dismissal. These are listed for information, and are not all-inclusive or binding for the purposes of this Procedure.
 - a) ~~The status of the minister(s) Teaching Elders, Commissioned Ruling Elders and members in the ordination process, currently called by the congregation: whether they shall remain with the congregation and transfer their ministerial status to the new denomination, or whether they choose to remain within the PC (U.S.A.), and thus need to look toward seeking a new call.~~
 - b) The status of any insurance policies held by the congregation with instrumentalities of the ~~PC (U.S.A.) may need to be changed.~~
 - c) The corporate status of the congregation shall be revised to reflect its dismissal.
 - d) The Presbytery agrees to execute all documents necessary to effectuate the transfer of all assets or property pursuant to this procedure.

Approval and Amendment of this Procedure

This Procedure shall be effective after a preliminary reading/discussion of the Procedure at a Presbytery meeting and ratification by a majority of those voting at a subsequent Presbytery meeting. Amendments to the Procedure are in order at the Presbytery meeting where the vote takes place.

Subsequent to the adoption of this Procedure, it may only be amended or rescinded by the same procedure stated above: after a preliminary reading/discussion of the Procedure at a Presbytery meeting and ratification by a majority of those voting at a subsequent Presbytery meeting.

The Procedure in effect on the date of the covenant agreement between the Session and the Presbytery shall remain in effect throughout the process for that particular congregation even if the Procedure is amended or ~~rescinded~~ by the Presbytery during the process.

Covenant Agreement

In order to promote the ongoing faithfulness of our members in the work of the Mission of God through Jesus Christ; exercise "mutual forbearance"; treat others with respect regardless of theological and ecclesiological differences; and work for fairness to all parties in our decisions; therefore, the General Council of the Presbytery of New Covenant and the congregation of the

Church of

, Texas, covenant to follow the Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure and abide by its terms as a way of discerning God's will for the relationship between the congregation and the Presbytery of New Covenant.

Date

Pastor Moderator General Council Presbytery of New Covenant

Clerk of Session Stated Clerk Presbytery of New Covenant

**THE PRESBYTERY OF NEW COVENANT
ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURE
FOR A CHURCH CONSIDERING OR SEEKING DISMISSAL
FROM THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)**

The Presbytery of New Covenant has established a Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure for member churches considering dismissal from the denomination and strongly encourages pastors, Sessions and congregations to engage in the process outlined in that Procedure.

Recognizing that there may be churches that either choose to seek dismissal from the PC (U.S.A.) without covenanting to abide by the Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure or that may choose to abandon that process before completing it while continuing to seek dismissal from the denomination, the Presbytery establishes this Alternative Procedure for Churches Seeking Dismissal from the PC (U.S.A.).

The intent of this Alternative Procedure is to provide guidelines for a gracious, decent, and orderly interaction between the Presbytery and churches seeking dismissal outside of the process defined in the Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure.

ALTERNATIVE PROCESS

When the Presbytery is notified that a church has taken steps to request dismissal from the PC (U.S.A.) without complying with the Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure or that a church that was proceeding under the Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure fails to complete it but is requesting dismissal, then the Presbytery will respond by following these guidelines.

A. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION

1. Pursuant to G-3.0109b(5), the Moderator of Presbytery shall nominate and the Presbytery shall elect, an Administrative Commission ("AC"). The primary task of the AC is to "attempt to inquire into and settle the difficulties" of the church in question. The authority of the AC will be specifically defined for the situation. Powers of the AC may include authorization for the AC to assume jurisdiction in whole or in part over the affairs of the church with the power to act in place of the Session.
2. The Stated Clerk of the Presbytery will conduct a training session for members of the AC to apprise them of the powers that are delegated to the AC, and the facts and circumstances that prompted the formation of the AC.
3. Powers granted to the AC by the Presbytery may include the authority for the AC:
 - a. to determine whether a schism exists within the congregation (*see Book of Order*, G-4.0207);
 - b. If schism exists, to determine if one of the factions of the church represents *the true church within the PC (U.S.A.)* (*see Book of Order*, G-4.0207);

c. to make recommendations to the Presbytery to dissolve pastoral relationships or to place pastors on administrative leave. When requisite authority is given by the Presbytery, the AC may dissolve pastoral relationships (*see Book of Order*, G-3.0109b);

d. to request records of the Session (*see Book of Order*, G-3.0108b), “If a higher governing body learns at any time of any irregularity or delinquency by a lower governing body, it may require the governing body to produce any records and take appropriate action.”;

e. to examine and copy whatever records of the church that may be relevant (e.g., how money is held, title to property, title policies, surveys, insurance documents, financial statements and records, budgets, tax returns, bank and account statements, mortgages or other loan documents, corporate articles, bylaws, and charters – especially changes in any of these).

f. to assume original jurisdiction (in whole or in part) in any case in which it determines that the Session is unable or unwilling to manage wisely the affairs of its church (*see Book of Order*, G-3.02 and G-3.0201);

g. to freeze the assets of the church and approve expenditures;

h. to secure the building, grounds and other property of the church for the use and benefit of the PC (U.S.A.);

i. to determine if and when a meeting of the congregation is appropriate for the purpose of voting to seek dismissal from the PC (U.S.A.);

j. to call that congregational meeting, and provide the moderator and clerk for that meeting and to report results of the congregational vote to the Presbytery;

k. to authorize oversight of the church, its ministry and its property by a group within the congregation that has been identified as “*the true church within the PC (U.S.A.)*” (G-4.0207);

l. to propose to the Presbytery any recommendation for the disposition of the property held by or for the church, and the assumption of the liabilities of the church, if there is no group within the congregation that has been identified as *the true church within the PC (U.S.A.)*, or if such group cannot or does not assume responsibility for the church, or its property or liabilities;

m. to consider the conformity with the PC (U.S.A.) (in matters of doctrines and order) of the proposed receiving body or denomination to which a congregation has, or may, request dismissal, and to propose to the Presbytery any recommendation regarding same for the Presbytery’s consideration and action.

n. to fulfill any other responsibilities as assigned by the Presbytery, or as may be necessary or appropriate in connection therewith or in connection with those set forth above.

B. CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

1. The AC shall keep the Presbytery informed of significant actions taken and shall make recommendations directly to the Presbytery for all actions that require the Presbytery's approval.
2. One of the powers of the AC is to determine when or if a meeting of the congregation is appropriate for the purpose of voting to seek dismissal from the PC (U.S.A.) to another Reformed denomination. Prior to any such vote, the leadership of the church shall furnish to the AC written verification that they will receive the church upon dismissal from the PC (U.S.A.). The Presbytery or AC may request any other written information about that denomination, such as doctrine, governance and permanence. The call for the congregational meeting shall be in accordance with the notice and quorum requirements of that congregation.
3. A request for withdrawal shall be by two-thirds vote of the active membership of the congregation as recorded in the Annual Statistical Report for the immediately preceding year. By such vote the congregation must adopt a resolution requesting that the Presbytery dismiss the church to a specified Reformed denomination that is in correspondence with the General Assembly of the PC (U.S.A.) and is a member of ecumenical bodies in which the PC (U.S.A.) is also a member. The resolution shall specify whether dismissal is sought with all or part the church's property or without the church's property. If dismissal is sought with part of the property then the resolution shall specify the property to be retained.

C. DISPOSITION OF CHURCH PROPERTY

1. Disposition of the property of the church shall be resolved in accordance with the provisions of G-4.0207 (Property of Congregation in Schism) and G-4.0208 (Exceptions) of the Book of Order.
2. A minority of the church congregation may choose to elect new church leadership and assume responsibility of the property subject to the jurisdiction of the AC or sell the property to the majority with the approval of the Presbytery (if required).

If the minority does not or cannot assume responsibility for the property within a reasonable period of time (as determined by the AC), then the AC may recommend that the Presbytery dismiss or dissolve the congregation, or dispose of the property, or take other appropriate action.

3. The AC may consider the following options for the disposition of the church property if there is no faction of the congregation that can or does assume responsibility for the church property as a continuing congregation of the PC (U.S.A.):
 - a. Sell, transfer, lease or otherwise dispose of the property to a third party;
 - b. Retain the property for a new church development, or hold, use and apply the property for another mission of the Presbytery;
 - c. Sell, lease or transfer the property to the membership of the dismissed congregation upon terms acceptable to the Presbytery on condition that the church is dismissed to another Reformed denomination.

Covenant Agreement

521

522

523

524

525

526

527

528

529

530

531

532

533

534

535

536

537

538

539

540

541

In order to: promote the ongoing faithfulness of our members in the work of the Mission of God through Jesus Christ; exercise “mutual forbearance”; treat others with respect regardless of theological and ecclesiological differences; and work for fairness to all parties in our decisions, therefore, the General Council of the Presbytery of New Covenant and the congregation of the

Church of

, Texas, covenant to follow the Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure and abide by its terms as a way of discerning God’s will for the relationship between the congregation and the Presbytery of New Covenant.

Date

Pastor/Moderator of Session

Moderator, General Council, Presbytery of New Covenant

Clerk of Session

Stated Clerk, Presbytery of New Covenant

Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure

PROLOGUE

The vision of the Presbytery of New Covenant is to *Grow congregations that passionately engage their community to make disciples*. Our mission is to -

- *Confess Jesus Christ as Lord*
- *Connect one another in ministry*
- *Challenge one another for mission.*

The Presbytery of New Covenant seeks to facilitate worship, mission, and other shared ministries by engaging all of the 106 churches in our bounds to be united in carrying out our vision and mission. We believe The Mission of God as expressed in the Great Ends of the Church is greater than the PC (U.S.A.).

Recognizing that polity changes effected by the passage of Amendment 10A and the new Form of Government have caused some congregations to reconsider their connection with the PC (U.S.A.), the Presbytery has adopted a Procedure for Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal. Nonetheless, a fundamental understanding from our Presbyterian heritage is one of connection rather than division. We believe that we discern the will of God more clearly in any particular time and place when we are in communion with each other than when we are separated. However, the Presbytery acknowledges that the particular forms of communion may shift over time, always reforming to better serve the mission of our Lord, Christ Jesus.

Ordination vows for all ordained persons include the following: "Will you seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?" To this end, we wish to remain open to imagining and considering a variety of options that may serve both our connection and our differences. Below is listed a sampling of potential options that congregations and the Presbytery could prayerfully consider to foster our unity. Some of these would require greater effort and agreement from other Councils of the church; some are more readily available. This necessarily incomplete listing is not intended to reflect recommendations of the Presbytery; rather it is intended to indicate the breadth of options open to us and to encourage expanded dialogue as we open ourselves to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

OPTIONAL RESPONSES:

1. Dual committee/evangelical cluster – establish two Committees on Ministry and two Committees on Preparation for Ministry based on shared understanding of scripture, mission priorities and the Presbytery's record in lay leader training, New Church Development and innovative mission projects. An alternative would be to lodge the responsibilities of COM and CPM in smaller affinity-based clusters.
2. Union congregations – PC (U.S.A.) congregations could unite with other Reformed Congregations (Cumberland, Evangelical Presbyterian Church, etc.) with the approval of both Councils (presbyteries) and, where polity requirements were in conflict, the Union agreement would indicate which polity to follow.

3. Union Presbyteries - PC (U.S.A.) presbyteries could unite with other Reformed Councils (Cumberland, Evangelical Presbyterian Church, etc.) with the approval of Councils (presbyteries, synods and General Assembly) and, where polity requirements were in conflict, the Union agreement would indicate which polity to follow.
4. Gracious Reconciliation – see attached Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure
5. Gracious Dismissal – see attached Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure
6. Alternative Dismissal Process – see attached Alternative Process for dismissal to a Reformed Body
7. Non-geographic Presbytery – not in the power of Presbytery of New Covenant, but the presbytery could establish a process to dismiss congregations to a non-geographic Presbytery and advocate for that option with Office of General Assembly.

Final Version

Presbytery of New Covenant Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure

The Presbytery of New Covenant is committed to pursuing reconciliation with pastors, sessions, and congregations who are considering dismissal from the denomination. Whether that reconciliation takes the form of dismissal, mutually accepted re-commitment to the Presbytery-congregational relationship, or something in-between, it is the will of this Presbytery to create a gracious context and process in which the will of God is sought for the life, ministry, and calling of the particular congregation. All congregations of this Presbytery are invited to commit to this broad understanding of reconciliation with a graciousness befitting those who claim Jesus as Lord.

The Presbytery and congregations will be continually guided by these three principles:

1. The Mission of God as expressed in the Great Ends of the Church is greater than the PC (U.S.A.). Therefore, we affirm that should Presbytery dismiss a congregation to another Reformed body, the unity of the one Church of Jesus Christ has not been diminished. (F-1.0302 and F-1.0304)
2. The exercise of “mutual forbearance” is of utmost importance in our process. Therefore, all will treat each other with respect regardless of theological and ecclesiological differences.
3. We will pray and work for fairness to all parties in our decisions.

It is the Presbytery’s belief that in adopting this Procedure congregations who faithfully follow it as a way of discerning if God would have them affiliate with another Reformed denomination are not engaged in schism and that therefore the Presbytery’s understanding is that G-4.0207 (Property of a Church in Schism) does not apply to congregations faithfully following this process.

If a session chooses not to follow this Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal process or abandons these processes before completion, then the “Alternative Process for a Church Seeking Dismissal from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” will apply.

In all matters relating to this subject, discerning answers to the following three questions will be deemed paramount:

1. Is God leading this particular congregation to restore fellowship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), or to seek dismissal from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?
2. If God is leading this congregation toward restoration of fellowship with the Presbyterian Church (USA), how can that be accomplished in a way that honors Jesus Christ and strengthens both the congregation and the Presbytery?
3. If God is leading this congregation to seek dismissal from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), how can that be accomplished in a way that honors Jesus Christ and strengthens both the congregation and the Presbytery?

The Presbytery asks that any session seeking or considering dismissal from the denomination to covenant with the Presbytery to enter into this defined process of mutual discernment through the formation of a Discernment Team from the Presbytery and the local congregation (see “Discernment Process” below). As described below, this process should take no less than six months and no more than two years. At the conclusion of the process, the Discernment Team will report and make recommendations to both the church and the Presbytery.

DISCERNMENT PROCEDURE

A session wishing to initiate this process shall put the matter to a vote. If at a duly noticed meeting with appropriate quorum, the session votes by two-thirds majority to initiate the discernment process, the Clerk of Session shall contact the Presbytery office and inform the Stated Clerk of this desire. The session shall then call a congregational meeting for the purpose of approving participation in the discernment process. At that meeting, the congregation shall vote to establish a quorum of 30% for any future meeting to vote on requesting dismissal from the PC (U.S.A.). If approved, the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery and the Clerk of Session (or their designated representative) will sign a Covenant Agreement (see below) and may then select member representatives for the Discernment Team.

The Discernment Team shall consist of four representatives from the church and four representatives from the Presbytery. The session of the congregation shall select the representatives from the church, one from the church staff, one from the session and two at large active members of the congregation. The General Council shall select two Ruling Elders and two Teaching Elders from the Presbytery. The Discernment Team shall covenant to meet together a minimum of five times.

First Meeting

The first meeting of the Discernment Team shall be convened by the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery (or the Clerk’s designated representative) to review this process and select a facilitator. The facilitator shall not be one of the eight members of the Discernment Team and shall have voice but not vote during the discernment process. The Discernment Team will engage in extended time of prayer and introductions. Following the first meeting, the Discernment Team will meet at least four more times. The expected content of the meetings is outlined below.

Second Meeting

The Discernment Team members will share their faith stories, their understanding of the spiritual and theological issues at stake between the congregation and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and pray for God’s guidance. This meeting will primarily be a listening and sharing session.

Third Meeting

The facilitator of the Discernment Team will guide a prayerful dialogue on foundational theological issues. The purpose of this discussion is to determine how much common theological and ecclesiastical ground exists between the congregation and the denomination.

Fourth Meeting

The Discernment Team will create a process of prayer and discernment to listen to the concerns, sensitivities and questions of congregation members.

Fifth Meeting

Upon completion of the listening process the Discernment Team will address the concerns, sensitivities and questions of congregation members.

Additional Meetings

The content of additional meetings will be determined mutually by members of the Discernment Team.

Upon completion of the above meetings and time committed to prayer, the Discernment Team will make a report with recommendations to the congregation in one or more “town hall” meetings.

If the session determines the congregation is still called by God to remain in covenant relationship with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), both parties will work together to heal any broken relationships (see “Guidelines for Restoration of Fellowship and Recommitment to Presbyterian-Congregational Relationship” below).

If the session votes to call a congregational meeting to recommend dismissal to another Reformed body, the session shall follow the “Procedure for Seeking Dismissal”. These policies and procedures shall take effect immediately upon approval by the Presbytery.¹

¹ NOTE: If a congregation or its leadership preemptively files suit in a civil court against the Presbytery, the Presbytery of New Covenant will answer and defend the suit. If suit is filed, the Presbytery of New Covenant also reserves the right to apply the Alternative Process for a Church Considering or Seeking Dismissal from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Likewise, if a congregation or its leadership abandons this Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure before completion, the Alternative Process for a Church Seeking Dismissal from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will apply.

GUIDELINES FOR RESTORATION OF FELLOWSHIP AND RECOMMITMENT TO PRESBYTERY-CONGREGATIONAL RELATIONSHIP

If the Session or congregation determines that it is called into a continued or transformed relationship with the Presbytery of New Covenant, the Discernment Team will create and conduct a process for continuation/transformation of fellowship and reaffirmation to the Presbytery-congregational relationship. The following are presented as minimal guidelines for marking and sealing that reaffirmation:

1. The Discernment Team will assist the Session in writing a covenant of reaffirmation articulating the nature and specifics of the future relationship between the congregation, Presbytery and the PC (U.S.A.).
2. Conducting a public service of worship and reaffirmation to shared fellowship and ministry, with participation from Presbytery and congregation.
3. Sharing of story and testimony from members of the Discernment Team and congregation at the congregational and Presbytery level (and beyond, if appropriate).
4. Blessing and commissioning of any minority that leaves the local congregation (to the extent possible), in the hope of maintaining bonds of peace.

PROCEDURE FOR SEEKING DISMISSAL

Upon completion of the discernment process described in the "Commitment to Reconciliation," a session and congregation desiring to enter into the process of seeking dismissal shall follow this procedure:

1. The session shall call for a meeting of the congregation. Advance notice for the meeting shall be by written letter to each member on the active roll of the congregation who is eligible to vote at the meeting, as well as through three Sunday worship announcements. The letter shall be mailed at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting date and shall include:
 - a. the motion from the session to be dismissed to a particular Reformed body
 - b. a written statement from the Discernment Team majority and minority (if applicable)
 - c. the amount the congregation shall contribute to the Presbytery (see item #5 below).

Public announcements of the congregational meeting shall be made at all worship services between the date of the call and the actual congregational meeting. Representatives of the Presbytery (which may include members of the Discernment Team, General Council, Stated Clerk, General Presbyter, and Associate General Presbyters) shall also be invited to the meeting, with the right to address the body gathered.
2. Members eligible to vote at the congregational meeting shall be those listed on the roll of Active members of the church (G-1.0402) as of the date of the letter calling the congregational meeting. The quorum for the congregational meeting shall be the designated quorum of the congregation or 30%, whichever is higher.
3. All members present, as well as the representatives of Presbytery, shall have the right to speak. When the discussion is concluded, the vote shall be taken by written ballot. At least two-thirds of those present voting must vote in favor of requesting dismissal to another Reformed body in order for the proposal to pass.
4. If at least two-thirds of those voting request dismissal, the Presbytery shall agree to the dismissal, permitting the congregation to depart with all of its property intact.
5. Prior to a desired dismissal, the session of the congregation shall enter into a legal contract on behalf of the congregation to contribute to the Presbytery the greater of: the per member share of the current Presbytery budget² or the average of the congregation's past three years' Presbytery contributions. These contributions will be contributed on a declining scale over a five year period according to the following schedule:

| | |
|---------------------|------|
| Year one -- | 100% |
| Year two -- | 80% |
| Year three -- | 60% |
| Year four -- | 40% |
| Year five -- | 20% |
| Year six and beyond | 0% |

² in 2011 the per member share of the presbytery budget was \$36.53

6. The Presbytery recognizes that “the church” in a particular area is not its building or financial assets, but the people of the congregation. When the required majority votes to join another Reformed body, and when a minority of at least 10% vote to remain in the PC (U.S.A.), a separate meeting shall be convened at a separate time to discern interest, if any, in starting a PC (U.S.A.) congregation. If 25 or more members of the active membership sign a letter expressing intent to begin another PC (U.S.A.) congregation, the New Church Development committee of Presbytery, or its agent, shall determine if the leadership, mission, and resources exist to organize a new church. If the NCD Committee or its agent makes that determination, an amount of money at least equal to the insured value of the property minus loans, multiplied by the percentage of its active membership signing a petition to organize a new church shall be made available for the new church development before dismissal of the majority with property.³
7. A congregation that is approved for dismissal may take its name with it.
8. In the event that any congregation’s request for dismissal is approved under the terms of this Procedure, the Presbytery shall, in conjunction with the congregation, hold a final worship service of commissioning, to celebrate our common life in Jesus Christ and to pray for the effectiveness and well-being of both the congregation and the Presbytery. Those departing the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will be commissioned by the Presbytery to further their work for the kingdom as they go forward in ministry. The service will be jointly planned by members of Presbytery’s General Council and the session, and all congregations of the Presbytery of New Covenant shall be invited.
9. A congregation being dismissed shall be required to remove the Presbytery of New Covenant from any outstanding loan guarantees and to pay off any loans outstanding to any entity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
10. A congregation being dismissed will be required to take a roll of its membership as of the official date of dismissal, to transfer the memberships of all those on the roll who request transfer to another congregation, and to file all reports required by the Presbytery for statistical record-keeping.
11. A congregation being dismissed will be required to work with the Presbyterian Board of Pensions to determine the effective date of the dismissal.
12. There are some practical considerations to be addressed, should a congregation be approved for dismissal. These are listed for information, and are not all-inclusive or binding for the purposes of this Procedure.
 - a) The status of the minister(s) currently called by the congregation: whether they shall remain with the congregation and transfer their ministerial status to the new denomination, or whether they choose to remain within the PC (U.S.A.), and thus need to look toward seeking a new call.

³ The intent of this section is to help a minority of the congregation who wish to remain in the PC (U.S.A.) by undertaking and supporting the initiation of a new PC (U.S.A.) congregation. Given the commercial value of much church land is many times the value of the buildings, this minimum formula (which can be exceeded) gives members wishing to start a new PC (U.S.A.) congregation significant funds to do so and asks a departing congregation to make significant contribution without unrealistically burdening the departing congregation.

- b) The status of any insurance policies held by the congregation with instrumentalities of the PC (U.S.A.) may need to be changed.
- c) The corporate status of the congregation shall be revised to reflect its dismissal.
- d) The presbytery agrees to execute all documents necessary to effectuate the transfer of all assets or property pursuant to this procedure.

Approval and Amendment of this Procedure

This Procedure shall be effective after a preliminary reading/discussion of the Procedure at a Presbytery meeting and ratification by a majority of those voting at a subsequent Presbytery meeting. Amendments to the Procedure are in order at the Presbytery meeting where the vote takes place.

Subsequent to the adoption of this Procedure, it may only be amended or rescinded by the same procedure stated above: after a preliminary reading/discussion of the Procedure at a Presbytery meeting and ratification by a majority of those voting at a subsequent Presbytery meeting.

The Procedure in effect on the date of the covenant agreement between the session and the Presbytery shall remain in effect throughout the process for that particular congregation even if the Procedure is amended or rescinded by the Presbytery during the process.

Covenant Agreement

In order to: promote the ongoing faithfulness of our members in the work of the Mission of God through Jesus Christ; exercise “mutual forbearance”; treat others with respect regardless of theological and ecclesiological differences; and work for fairness to all parties in our decisions, therefore, the General Council of the Presbytery of New Covenant and the congregation of the

Church of

, Texas, covenant to follow the Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure and abide by its terms as a way of discerning God’s will for the relationship between the congregation and the Presbytery of New Covenant.

Date

Final Version

Pastor

Moderator General Council- Presbytery of New Covenant

Clerk of Session

Stated Clerk – Presbytery of New Covenant

**THE PRESBYTERY OF NEW COVENANT
ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURE
FOR A CHURCH CONSIDERING OR SEEKING DISMISSAL
FROM THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)**

The Presbytery of New Covenant has established a Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure for member churches considering dismissal from the denomination and strongly encourages pastors, sessions and congregations to engage in the process outlined in that Procedure.

Recognizing that there may be churches that either choose to seek dismissal from the PC (U.S.A.) without covenanting to abide by the Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure or that may choose to abandon that process before completing it while continuing to seek dismissal from the denomination, the Presbytery establishes this Alternative Procedure for Churches Seeking Dismissal from the PC (U.S.A.).

The intent of this Alternative Procedure is to provide guidelines for a gracious, decent, and orderly interaction between the Presbytery and churches seeking dismissal outside of the process defined in the Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure.

ALTERNATIVE PROCESS

When the Presbytery is notified that a church has taken steps to request dismissal from the PC (U.S.A.) without complying with the Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure or that a church that was proceeding under the Gracious Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure fails to complete it but is requesting dismissal, then the Presbytery will respond by following these guidelines.

A. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION

1. Pursuant to G-3.0109b(5), the Moderator of Presbytery shall nominate and the Presbytery shall elect, an Administrative Commission ("AC"). The primary task of the AC is to "attempt to inquire into and settle the difficulties" of the church in question. The authority of the AC will be specifically defined for the situation. Powers of the AC may include authorization for the AC to assume jurisdiction in whole or in part over the affairs of the church with the power to act in place of the session.
2. The Stated Clerk of Presbytery will conduct a training session for members of the AC to apprise them of the powers that are delegated to the AC, and the facts and circumstances that prompted the formation of the AC.
3. Powers granted to the AC by the Presbytery may include the authority for the AC:
 - a. to determine whether a schism exists within the congregation (*see Book of Order*, G-4.0207);
 - b. If schism exists, to determine if one of the factions of the church represents *the true church within the PC (U.S.A.)* (*see Book of Order*, G-4.0207);
 - c. to make recommendations to the Presbytery to dissolve pastoral relationships or to place pastors on administrative leave. When requisite authority is given by the Presbytery, the AC may dissolve pastoral relationships (*see Book of Order*, G-3.0109b);

d. to request records of the session (*see Book of Order*, G-3.0108b), “If a higher governing body learns at any time of any irregularity or delinquency by a lower governing body, it may require the governing body to produce any records and take appropriate action.”;

e. to examine and copy whatever records of the church that may be relevant (e.g., how money is held, title to property, title policies, surveys, insurance documents, financial statements and records, budgets, tax returns, bank and account statements, mortgages or other loan documents, corporate articles, bylaws, and charters – especially changes in any of these).

f. to assume original jurisdiction (in whole or in part) in any case in which it determines that the session is unable or unwilling to manage wisely the affairs of its church (*see Book of Order*, G-3.02 and G-3.0201);

g. to freeze the assets of the church and approve expenditures;

h. to secure the building, grounds and other property of the church for the use and benefit of the PC (U.S.A.);

i. to determine if and when a meeting of the congregation is appropriate for the purpose of voting to seek dismissal from the PC (U.S.A.);

j. to call that congregational meeting, and provide the moderator and clerk for that meeting and to report results of the congregational vote to the Presbytery;

k. to authorize oversight of the church, its ministry and its property by a group within the congregation that has been identified as “the true church within the PC (U.S.A.)” (G-4.0207);

l. to propose to the Presbytery any recommendation for the disposition of the property held by or for the church, and the assumption of the liabilities of the church, if there is no group within the congregation that has been identified as *the true church within the PC (U.S.A.)*, or if such group cannot or does not assume responsibility for the church, or its property or liabilities;

m. to consider the conformity with the PC (U.S.A.) (in matters of doctrines and order) of the proposed receiving body or denomination to which a congregation has, or may, request dismissal, and to propose to the Presbytery any recommendation regarding same for the Presbytery’s consideration and action.

n. to fulfill any other responsibilities as assigned by the Presbytery, or as may be necessary or appropriate in connection therewith or in connection with those set forth above.

B. CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

- t. The AC shall keep the Presbytery informed of significant actions taken and shall make recommendations directly to the Presbytery for all actions that require the Presbytery’s approval.

2. One of the powers of the AC is to determine when or if a meeting of the congregation is appropriate for the purpose of voting to seek dismissal from the PC (U.S.A.) to another Reformed denomination. Prior to any such vote, the leadership of the church shall furnish to the AC written verification that they will receive the church upon dismissal from the PC (U.S.A.). The Presbytery or AC may request any other written information about that denomination, such as doctrine, governance and permanence. The call for the congregational meeting shall be in accordance with the notice and quorum requirements of that congregation.
3. A request for withdrawal shall be by two-thirds vote of the active membership of the congregation as recorded in the Annual Statistical Report for the immediately preceding year. By such vote the congregation must adopt a resolution requesting that the Presbytery dismiss the church to a specified Reformed denomination that is in correspondence with the General Assembly of the PC (U.S.A.) and is a member of ecumenical bodies in which the PC (U.S.A.) is also a member. The resolution shall specify whether dismissal is sought with all or part the church's property or without the church's property. If dismissal is sought with part of the property then the resolution shall specify the property to be retained.

C. DISPOSITION OF CHURCH PROPERTY

1. Disposition of the property of the church shall be resolved in accordance with the provisions of G-4.0207 (Property of Congregation in Schism) and G-4.0208 (Exceptions) of the Book of Order.
2. A minority of the church congregation may choose to elect new church leadership and assume responsibility of the property subject to the jurisdiction of the AC or sell the property to the majority with the approval of the Presbytery (if required).
If the minority does not or cannot assume responsibility for the property within a reasonable period of time (as determined by the AC), then the AC may recommend that the Presbytery dismiss or dissolve the congregation, or dispose of the property, or take other appropriate action.
3. The AC may consider the following options for the disposition of the church property if there is no faction of the congregation that can or does assume responsibility for the church property as a continuing congregation of the PC (U.S.A.):
 - a. Sell, transfer, lease or otherwise dispose of the property to a third party;
 - b. Retain the property for a new church development, or hold, use and apply the property for another mission of the Presbytery;
 - c. Sell, lease or transfer the property to the membership of the dismissed congregation upon terms acceptable to the Presbytery on condition that the church is dismissed to another Reformed denomination.

Report of General Council on Windwood Presbyterian Church

The following documents for the Presbytery a chronology of recent events between Windwood Presbyterian Church and the Presbytery of New Covenant.

- In September of 2008, Windwood Presbyterian Church filed suit against the presbytery and the denomination for a declaratory judgment that their property was not subject to the trust clause in the Book of Order, in other words that title to the church property was unencumbered.
- The General Council, acting as Trustees of the Presbytery of New Covenant, acted to engage the legal services of Fred Cook to defend the presbytery in this lawsuit. Fred has graciously represented the presbytery pro bono.
- General Council's actions are consistent with the authority specified in the Manual of Operations (page 6) adopted by the Presbytery which delineates that General Council
 - "Serve as the trustees of the presbytery
 - As trustees, act upon requests of congregations to sell, encumber, or lease properties, reporting such actions to the next presbytery meeting (*amendment 8-2010*)"
- General Council of Presbytery has the power to take action on behalf of Presbytery with respect to litigation. G-3.0106 of the Book of Order requires that each council develop a manual of operations. Presbytery has adopted a manual of operations that empowers the General Council to serve as trustees of the Presbytery. This action also is consistent with G-4.0101, which authorizes a presbytery, when permitted by civil law, to form a corporation and determine a method to constitute the board of trustees, who shall have the powers to receive, hold, encumber, manage and transfer property. Texas law permits the formation of non-profit corporations, and the Presbytery of New Covenant is a Texas non-profit corporation. Section 113.019 of the Texas Property Code provides that trustees may "compromise, contest, arbitrate, or settle claims of or against the trust estate or the trustees." Here, the "trust estate" includes the property of Presbytery. Under Texas law, causes of action are part of an entity's "property," over which trustees like General Council have power.
- The presbytery leadership met with Windwood leadership in 2012 to offer a settlement of allowing Windwood to enter the Reconciliation and Dismissal Procedure with no prejudice for their having filed a lawsuit in exchange for dropping the lawsuit. That settlement offer was declined.
- The lawsuit has been through the court system and presbytery has prevailed at each step through the initial appeal. After the Texas Supreme Court decision in August, 2013, the Texas Appeals Court, which had previously ruled in favor of the presbytery, issued a new ruling that the lawsuit should be sent back to the original court for a new trial on January 7, 2014. The presbytery and PC(USA) moved for rehearing. We have not received any further word from the Appeals Court.
- On May 11, presbytery leadership was alerted to the fact that the session at Windwood had called a congregational meeting for May 18 to vote to "terminate their voluntary affiliation with the PCUSA." The presbytery leadership informed the session that this was not a legal action of the congregation.

- Following the May 18 congregational meeting which voted 98% - 2% to “terminate their voluntary affiliation with the PCUSA, the Stated Clerk received letters from the pastors, Kevin Rudolph and Pat Ryan renouncing jurisdiction of the PCUSA. The Stated Clerk also received a letter from the session notifying us of the unilateral action of the congregation.
- The Stated Clerk notified the session and former pastors that the presbytery would provide a moderator for conducting their regular business who would not interfere with actions related to the lawsuit or unilateral action of the congregation.
- The Clerk of session notified the Stated Clerk that anyone from the presbytery attempting to enter the property of Windwood Presbyterian Church would be considered trespassing.
- On July 2, 2014, the Stated Clerk and General Presbyter received the following communication from the Presbytery of the West and Texas in ECO:

Dear Mike and Lynn,

As you are aware, it is ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians’ policy to strongly encourage PCUSA churches seeking membership with us to work with their present Presbytery and their gracious dismissal procedure. The situation becomes more complicated when a Presbytery chooses to: 1) act by Administrative Commission on a case by case basis and therefore in an arbitrary manner; 2) to act although an agreement cannot be reached because there has been no two party negotiations or mediated settlement. (It is not realistic to think that if both parties do not negotiate in good faith that it opens the door to legal action on behalf of the church); 3) demand financial settlements beyond the ability of the church to pay; or 4) when previous litigation has already shaped decisions being made by the church and or the Presbytery to such a degree that trust has been lost.

After considerable investigation, our analysis is that Windwood Presbyterian Church falls into category # 4. I say this without finding fault with anyone. Though it is a case of last resort, ECO does receive disaffiliated churches upon a case by case basis for which Windwood qualifies. Please know that we did not make this decision without realizing the gravity of the situation. We ask you to realize that ECO was neither part nor party to the litigation nor did we encourage Windwood in their decisions that led to their course of action. In fact, it was the way things turned out for Heritage Presbyterian Church that determined Windwood’s course of action both in 2008.

I write this because I did not want you to be caught by surprise. These are indeed challenging times for us all.

Your fellow servant in our Lord,

Bob Bullock

Bob Bullock, D. Min.

Moderator, ECO Presbytery of the West & Texas

Pastor, West Isle Presbyterian Church, Galveston, Texas

- On July 2, 2014 the Stated Clerk and General Presbyter responded to the letter from ECO expressing displeasure with their decision to receive a congregation that had not requested dismissal.

The General Council, in acting on behalf of the presbytery, has been mindful of the following considerations in all matters regarding litigation:

- As overseer of the budget of Presbytery, General Council has been and will be aware of costs associated with litigation, acting with all due care required of an entity serving in the fiduciary role of trustee.
- Although General Council has been duly authorized to act on behalf of the Presbytery (subject to being accountable to it), General Council has no desire to take authority onto itself for the ultimate settling or disposing of any legal action. It is therefore General Council's intention to seek the consultation and approval of Presbytery, prior to reaching any final settlement or other disposition other than a ruling of the Court.
- General Council will make regular reports to the body of the status of the litigation and ecclesiastical status at all stated meetings of the Presbytery and will provide electronic updates as necessary in the event of important developments between such meetings.
- As a matter of course, all provisions of the Book of Order remain in effect regarding the freedom of Commissioners to challenge actions taken by the General Council whether at stated or called meetings of the Presbytery and to initiate called meetings.
- It is possible that additional civil legal actions may be brought against Presbytery in the future, and it is the intent of General Council again to act swiftly to protect the interests of Presbytery, including engaging legal counsel when necessary under the circumstances.

In all things, General Council will strive to honor our Triune God and seek to serve in the best interests of New Covenant Presbytery.

Report of General Council on Litigation First Presbyterian Church of Houston

The following documents for the Presbytery a chronology of events and actions taken by General Council on behalf of the Presbytery in response to litigation filed in civil court by First Presbyterian Church of Houston.

- On May 29, 2014, a cause of action was brought by First Presbyterian Church of Houston against the Presbytery in a case styled: “*First Presbyterian Church of Houston, Plaintiff v. Presbytery of New Covenant, Inc., Defendant*, Cause No. 2014-30354 (the “FPC Case”).
- The General Presbyter and Stated Clerk of the Presbytery first received notice of the FPC Case by facsimile and hand-delivery to the Presbytery offices on the afternoon of the date the case was filed.
- Concurrent with the filing of the FPC Case, a Temporary Restraining Order was granted against the Presbytery.
- A Hearing for Temporary Injunction in the FPC Case was set for June 9, 2014.
- Given that time was of the essence in this matter due to the impending Hearing, your General Council acted swiftly on behalf of the Presbytery to empower the General Presbyter and Stated Clerk to engage legal representation to protect the interests of the Presbytery.
- To this end, the Presbytery has retained the law firm of Schiffer Odom Hicks & Johnson, PLLC to represent us in this matter.
- General Council’s actions are consistent with the authority specified in the Manual of Operations (page 6) adopted by the Presbytery which delineates that General Council
 - “Serve as the trustees of the presbytery
 - As trustees, act upon requests of congregations to sell, encumber, or lease properties, reporting such actions to the next presbytery meeting (*amendment 8-2010*)”
- General Council of Presbytery has the power to take action on behalf of Presbytery with respect to litigation. G-3.0106 of the Book of Order requires that each council develop a manual of operations. Presbytery has adopted a manual of operations that empowers the General Council to serve as trustees of the Presbytery. This action also is consistent with G-4.0101, which authorizes a presbytery, when permitted by civil law, to form a corporation and determine a method to constitute the board of trustees, who shall have the powers to receive, hold, encumber, manage and transfer property. Texas law permits the formation of non-profit corporations, and the Presbytery of New Covenant is a Texas non-profit corporation. Section 113.019 of the Texas Property Code provides that trustees may “compromise, contest, arbitrate, or settle claims of or against the trust estate or the trustees.” Here, the “trust estate” includes the property of Presbytery. Under Texas law, causes of action are part of an entity’s “property,” over which trustees like General Council have power.
- The hearing originally scheduled for June 9 was delayed and has been scheduled for the afternoon of July 14.

- With concurrence of counsel, the General Presbyter, Stated Clerk and Moderator of General Council met on June 9, 2014 with representatives appointed by the Session of FPC to discuss the possibility of amicable settlement of this matter.
- The Presbytery's attorneys have prepared and filed pleadings with the Court providing arguments and requesting dismissal of the case against the Presbytery and other actions. A Hearing on this case is scheduled for July 14. It is anticipated that attorneys for both parties may seek to depose relevant individuals prior to that hearing.

The General Council, in acting on behalf of the presbytery, has been mindful of the following considerations in all matters regarding litigation:

- As overseer of the budget of Presbytery, General Council has been and will be aware of costs associated with litigation, acting with all due care required of an entity serving in the fiduciary role of trustee.
- Although General Council has been duly authorized to act on behalf of the Presbytery (subject to being accountable to it), General Council has no desire to take authority onto itself for the ultimate settling or disposing of any legal action. It is therefore General Council's intention to seek the consultation and approval of Presbytery, prior to reaching any final settlement or other disposition other than a ruling of the Court.
- General Council will make regular reports to the body of the status of the litigation at all stated meetings of the Presbytery and will provide electronic updates as necessary in the event of important developments between such meetings.
- It is possible that additional civil legal actions may be brought against Presbytery in the future, and it is the intent of General Council again to act swiftly to protect the interests of Presbytery, including engaging legal counsel when necessary under the circumstances.

In all things, General Council will strive to honor our Triune God and seek to serve in the best interests of New Covenant Presbytery.

Vision Initiative Grant Awards 2014

| Applicant | Description | Amount Requested | MDSC Action |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Atascocita PC | Outreach to CLC | \$4,500 | \$2,250 |
| First PC, Angleton | Messy Church | \$2,500 | \$2,500 |
| First, Wharton | Young Family Ministry | \$5,060 | \$2,050 |
| Heritage PC | Marketing Campaign | \$5,000 | \$5,000 |
| Institute for Civility | Legislative Seminar for Youth | \$6,000 | Declined |
| Juan Marcos PC | Cho Yeh scholarships | \$2,400 | withdrawn by applicant |
| Pinecrest PC | Enhanced Worship | \$4,000 to \$6,000 | \$4,000 |
| St Philip PC | Kids Against Hunger | \$850 | Declined |
| UCM, Aggieland | Evangelism Events | \$6,000 | \$6,000 |
| Woodforest PC | Young Family Ministry | \$17,500 | \$5,000 |
| Young Nak PC | Block Party | \$750 | \$1,000 |

Total Grants Requested: \$56,500 (using \$6K for Pinecrest)
 VI Grant \$ Available for 2014: \$ 35,799
 Total Grants Awarded: \$27,800

At the June meeting, an additional Vision Initiative Grant was given to Heritage PC for the Young Music Ministers program for \$4800. This brings the total of Vision Initiative Grants to \$32,600.

Social Justice Grant Awards 2014

| Applicant | Description | Amount Requested | MDSC Action |
|--|-------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| First, Brazoria PC | Feed My Lambs | \$1,500 | \$1,100 |
| Diacona of Christ, (St Andrews, Beaumont) | transitional housing for women | \$1,000 | \$740 |
| Juan Marcos PC | Family Emergency Fund | \$2500 | \$1480 |
| Pinecrest PC | Senior Meals Program | \$2,000 | \$1,480 |
| Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services | Single Parent Residential Program | \$2,000 | \$1,480 |
| St Philip, Houston | Kids Against Hunger | \$2,000 | \$1,480 |
| UCM, Aggieland | Justin Lee Event | \$2,000 | \$2,000 |
| Webster PC | Summer Enrichment: At-Risk Children | \$1000 | \$740 |

Amount of Grants Requested: \$14,000

Lynn Johnson Social Justice Grants Available: \$10,493

Total Grants Awarded: \$ 10,500

REPORT FROM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH GROWTH

For July meeting of Presbytery of New Covenant

G.1

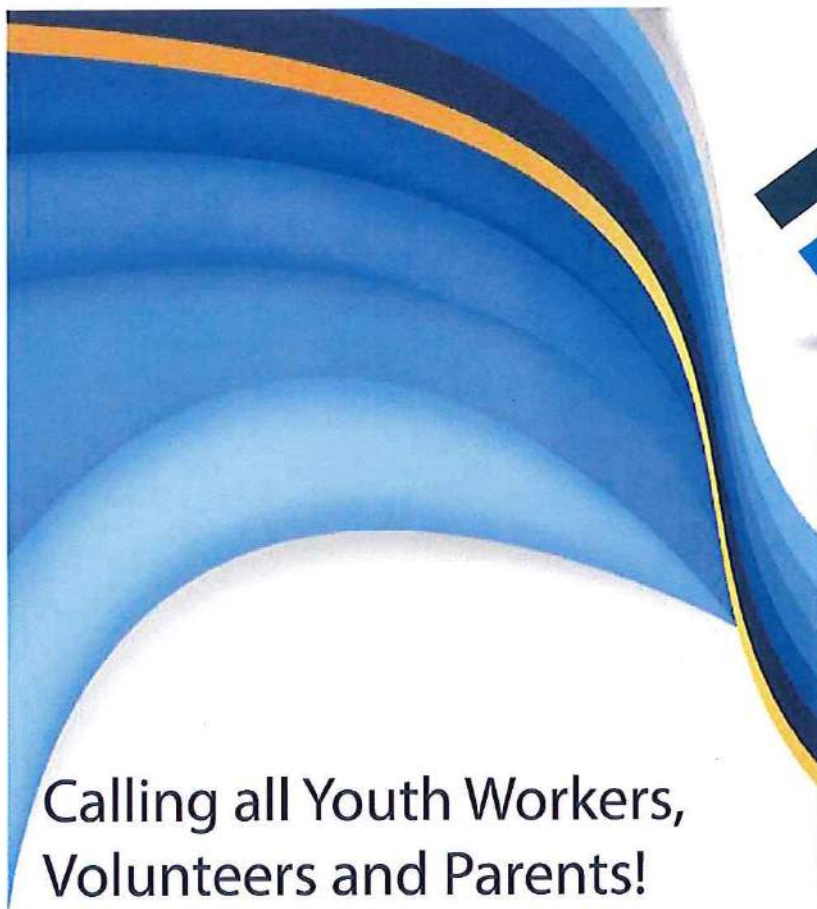
The Evangelism and Church Growth Committee (ECG) met May 6 and June 24th. We continue to work closely with all of the existing New Church Development Projects and New Worshiping Community initiatives. The current NCD and NWC groups are listed below. We are pleased to announce that Amigos, Community of Hope, and Love Community are all receiving funds through the 1001 New Worshiping Communities grants.

| Project | Organizing pastor | Liaison |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Brazilian | Honorio Theodoro Tedo | Chris French |
| BitSarang | Isaak Cho | Shawn Kang |
| Iglesia Latina | | Gladys Chacon |
| Bellaire Vietnamese * | Daniel Nguyen | Ryan Cook |
| Presbyterian Church of the Redeemer/United Ghanaian | Ebenezer Boateng | Jon Burnham |
| AMIGOS NWC * | Aurelio Rodriquez | Ryan Cook |
| Restoration Fellowship | Bob David | Jim Gill |
| Love Community Vietnamese NWC | Hien Nguyen | Margaret Swarts |
| Discovery NWC | | |
| HanSarang | Peter Lee | |

In an effort to build relationships within the Presbytery and to help our committee have a better understanding of the needs related to the work of the ECG committee, our members have been making visits and contacts with individual pastors and clusters of pastors. These visits will continue, and they have been very helpful in terms of learning what work related to ECG is already taking place in the Presbytery, considering ways we can support that existing work and share the particular ministries that have been successful with other congregations, and discern what we might offer from our committee to encourage congregations in the work of ECG.

The denomination is sponsoring a national conference on Evangelism and Church Growth at St. Pete Beach, Florida, August 11-14. We have invited all the NCD and NWC pastors to attend the conference, and are pleased that at this point three have accepted that invitation. Mary Marcotte will also be attending.

Submitted by Wayne Eberly, chair, Evangelism and Church Growth Committee



Calling all Youth Workers, Volunteers and Parents!

Join us for EQUIP, a day of workshops and worship that will educate, equip and empower you to minister and care for young people. Bring your youth ministry team of volunteers for training that will prepare them for the new school year! Invite parents to learn about the "real world" of teenagers and how to help them navigate the complexities of faith and life.

This is a FREE event and open to everyone.

SCHEDULE

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 8:30 a.m. | Registration Opens |
| 9:00 a.m. | Gathering and Opening Worship |
| 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. | Workshop 1 |
| 11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. | Lunch |
| 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. | Workshop 2 |
| 2:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. | Closing Worship |

When: Saturday, August 16, 2014

Location: St. Philip Presbyterian Church,
4807 San Felipe, Houston, TX 77056

This is a FREE Event. Lunch will be \$8.00 per person

Registration

Name _____

Address _____

City| State | Zip _____

Church _____

City _____

Email address _____

POSITION

- ☐ Youth Director (Full time)
- ☐ Youth Director (Part time)
- ☐ Clergy
- ☐ Volunteer Youth Worker
- ☐ Parent of Youth
- ☐ DCE
- ☐ Other _____

Please select one morning and afternoon workshop
Workshop descriptions are on back of flyer

Morning

- ☐ Child Protection Policy: Creation and Revision
- ☐ How to Teach Sunday School and Bible Study
- ☐ Social Media: Use, Dangers & Monitoring
- ☐ Calendar Craze: The Rhythm and Balance of YM
- ☐ "The Real World" of Teenagers

Afternoon

- ☐ How to Keep Youth Safe
- ☐ Sticky Faith
- ☐ Helping Teenagers in Crisis
- ☐ What's Out There? Youth Curriculum & Resources
- ☐ Confirmation Class: Who, What, When, Where, How

Mail registration to:
Caressa Murray
Presbytery of New Covenant
1110 Lovett Boulevard
Houston, TX 77006

Register online at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/equip-tickets-11862163049>

Workshop Descriptions

MORNING WORKSHOP OPTIONS:

Child Protection Policy: Creation & Revision

How does a church go about writing a child protection policy? What should be included? We have a policy, but it needs to be revised. Where do we start? Come learn about the precautions and responsibilities of adult volunteers and your church in keeping children and youth safe.

How to teach Sunday school and Bible study without putting youth to sleep!

Are your senior high youth yawning more than their talking? Is your junior high class climbing the walls and having trouble focusing... SQUIRREL! Join us for a discussion and exploration of resources and strategies to help God's Word come alive for young people.

Social Media: Uses, Dangers & Monitoring (For Youth Workers AND Parents)

How do I utilize social media in youth ministry? What are the dangers of social media: for me as a youth worker, for the youth, for parents? What precautions should I be taking? What guidance should I be giving the youth? As a parent, how do I navigate social media and monitor my teen's use? Come learn the ins and outs of social media.

Calendar Craze: the Rhythm & Balance of Youth Ministry
Games and Mission and Bible Study, oh my! Bowling and Worship and Fundraisers, oh why?! Workshop leaders will discuss the "Four-Legged Stool" philosophy for a holistic, balanced youth ministry and what this looks like on a weekly basis. They will give tips and advice on how to get organized and orchestrate your youth calendar. They will also share what Presby options are out there for mission, camps and conferences.

"The Real World" of Teenagers (For Youth Workers AND Parents)

Think you know what it's like to be a teenager today? Think again. Teens face difficult issues, powerful pressures, and serious temptations on a daily basis. In order to minister with and care for teens, we must first seek to understand what life is like in this day and time.

AFTERNOON WORKSHOP OPTIONS:

How to Keep Youth Safe: Training for Adults who work with Youth

Workshop participants will engage in child protection training that is often required of church volunteers working with children and youth. Topics that will be addressed: the roles, responsibilities and expectations of adult volunteers; safety guidelines and procedures; reporting and responding to allegations; definitions and signs of child abuse; appropriate behavior and creating a safe environment

Sticky Faith: Enabling Youth to Build a Faith that Sticks! (For Youth Workers AND Parents)

If you're a parent of kids of any age, you've probably wondered a lot about your children's faith. How is their faith shaping their life? What will happen to their faith when they leave home? If you're a youth worker, you wonder if youth will take their faith with them when they head towards college. What helps a student stick with their faith after they've left the youth group? Come hear compelling research and learn practical ideas to help teens develop a faith that sticks.

Helping Teenagers in Crisis (For Youth Workers AND Parents)

Teens today encounter significant crises: family break-ups, substance abuse, sexual assault, eating disorders, cutting, suicide, gun violence. How do you as a youth worker respond to teens in crisis and then how do you guide, support and minister to teen and family? As a parent, how do you forge preventive partnerships or bring healing when the damage is done? In this workshop we will address these questions and many more.

What's Out There?! Youth Curriculum & Resources

Are your youth tired of the same old Sunday school or youth group routine? Feel like you're not reaching them? Looking for creative ideas that don't cost a fortune or come in a box? Then you will want to come hear about the smorgasbord of resources and curriculum that are out there and explore some creative ideas from experienced youth workers.

Confirmation Class: Who, What, When, Where, How

There are many different ways to do Confirmation, but what is best for your church? We will share what curriculums are available and how to tweak them to your context. We will discuss class duration, format, time, ages, teachers, mentors, field trips, prayer, but most of all we will explore how Confirmation can celebrate a young person's spirituality, creativity, and responsibility as a disciple of Christ.



Make a difference

Through Fair Trade, farmers around the world are able to get out of poverty, support their families, stay on their land and care for the environment. Working in democratically-run co-operatives, small-scale farmers gain control of their own livelihoods and make strides together in community development, organic agriculture and quality control. With the added income from Fair Trade, farmers invest not only in their business but also in education and social services for their communities.



GUMUTINDO CO-OPERATIVE MEMBERS FROM NASUFWA, UGANDA
GATHER TO TALK ABOUT THEIR ROLES AS WOMEN AND MOTHERS.

"Look at all we've done. With help from the co-op and our partnership with Equal Exchange, we feel excited about the future. So many things are possible."

DONIA ANA LUCIA BAÑOL,
COFFEE FARMER, ASPROCAFE INGRUMÁ, COLOMBIA

For every pound of Equal Exchange products you purchase, Equal Exchange donates 15 cents per pound to the Presbyterian Hunger Program for sustainable farming and community development grants around the world. Visit www.pcusa.org/fairtrade to learn more and make additional donations.



for all who love making a difference



The Presbyterian Coffee Project is a partnership between the Presbyterian Church (USA) and Equal Exchange, a worker-owned co-operative offering 100% fairly traded coffee, chocolate, tea and foods.



Learn more about the Presbyterian Hunger Program and PC(USA)'s work in Fair Trade:
www.pcusa.org/hunger and
www.pcusa.org/fairtrade.
Thank you for your support!

Bring Equal Exchange to your community, congregation, school, office and home:
www.equalexchange.coop/community

774-776-7366



THE PRESBYTERIAN COFFEE PROJECT
Communities in the US and around the world sharing a taste of justice together



YOUR COMMUNITY:

Where great taste and great values come together.

Through the Presbyterian Coffee Project, your congregation can enjoy delicious fairly traded coffee, tea and chocolate at wholesale prices while making a difference for small farmer co-operatives around the world.



Serve

Make your fellowship hour a lively convergence of good taste and good values. Our Coffee Hour Starter Kit makes it easy!



Give

Your holiday bazaar will be the most popular shopping stop with Equal Exchange products. Our online store offers gift baskets, artisan items, and business gifts, too.



Take it Home

Give your community the chance to take home a taste of justice through monthly sales or a buying group.



Fundraise

Make money and make a difference. Sell our products after worship or at an event or use our attractive catalog fundraiser that will delight all and provide 40% profits for your group or school.



Educate, Energize

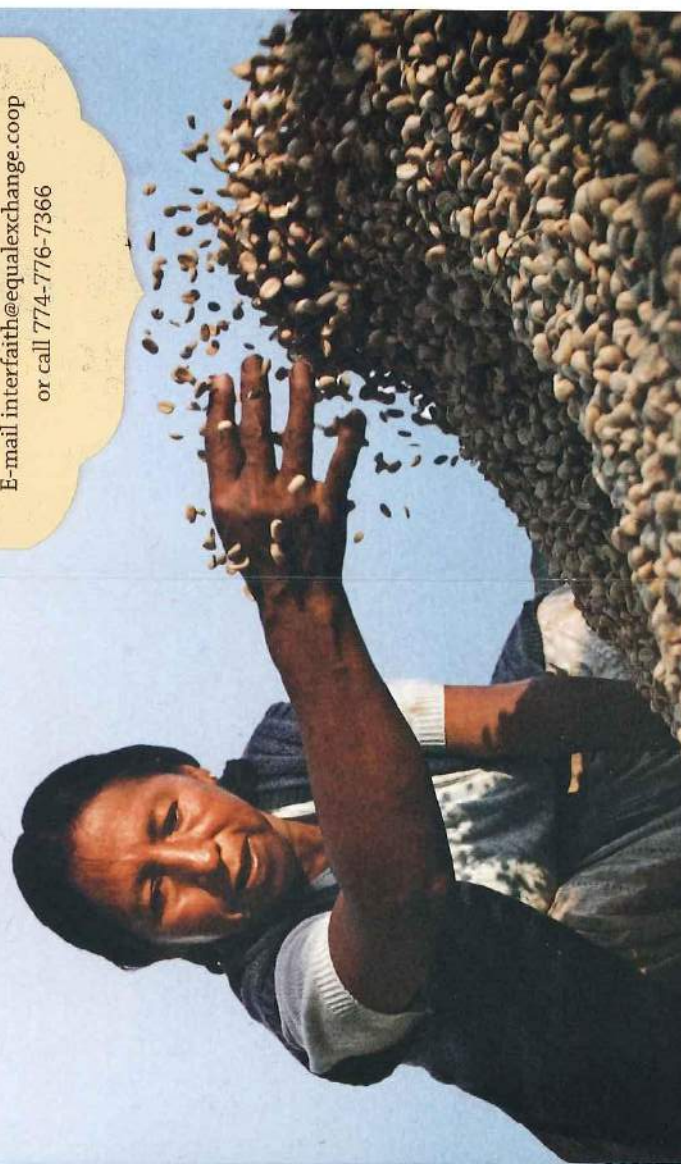
Engage your congregation and learn about how small farmer co-operatives around the world benefit from your purchases. We offer free educational materials.



A coffee farmer and member of COCIA Co-operative in Peru mixes coffee beans as they dry on a patio.

"At our church, it's not just about the cup of fresh-brewed coffee. It's about the relationships that people are building and the community that is forming while they are sharing that cup of coffee."

LOIS RICHARDSON, SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, KNOXVILLE, TN



Get Started

Sign up

Visit www.equalexchange.coop/community

Shop

Visit <http://interfaith.equalexchange.coop> or go to www.equalexchange.coop/pcusa to download a product list and order form.

Questions?

E-mail interfaith@equalexchange.coop or call 774-776-7366