

June 26, 2013

Dear Congregation,

Since the vote on June 2, when you, the members of College Hill Presbyterian Church, voted to seek dismissal from the PCUSA and join A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (ECO), your Session and Discernment Team have been busy with the next steps.

Seeking Presbytery Approval

A letter was written informing the Cincinnati Presbytery of the vote results and a request to have our dismissal from the PCUSA approved at their next Presbytery meeting on Tuesday, September 10. This meeting will be held at Llanfair Retirement Community in College Hill. We are not sure of the schedule for the meeting but will inform the congregation when we know.

Received ECO Approval

ECO was also contacted with the results and our desire to pursue membership with them. Drew filled out an application to have his ordination moved to ECO and was interviewed by ECO representatives on Monday afternoon, June 17. Session was interviewed on Wednesday evening, June 19. With much gratitude and praise to God, we received an official letter welcoming both Drew and our congregation to ECO (upon our dismissal from the PCUSA) on Friday morning, June 21. We are very excited as God continues to bless this process and our participation in it.

We have a very capable team of elders, past and present, assembled to research and coordinate required adjustments to employee benefits as well as editing our tax-deductible status and corporation by-laws. As needed, these changes will be brought to the congregation for approval at our next congregational meeting in October.

Your Individual Membership in ECO

Per the dismissal policy with the Presbytery, an up to date membership list will need to be submitted at the September 10 meeting. Any active member that does not want their membership transferred to ECO must make that known to Michelle Hemsath (541-5676 or mhemsath@chpc.org). Membership can be transferred to another PCUSA congregation or the Presbytery may hold the membership for one year. All current, active members, that do not object, will have their membership automatically transferred to ECO on the formal date agreed upon by the Presbytery.

Your Ordination in ECO

Any active members that are ordained as elders or deacons in the PCUSA, and currently not serving in an office, will be receiving further information about transferring their ordination to ECO. This transfer would confirm an officer's affirmation of ECO's Essential Tenets and Polity. Two separate opportunities to receive more information about ordination in ECO and the Essential Tenets and Polity will be offered in July and August (see information about Upcoming Classes).

ECO Training for Leadership

Two of the core values of ECO that attracted the Session are ‘Thoughtful Theology’ and ‘Leadership Velocity.’ These values are based on beliefs that theological education and constant learning are vital to our Reformed faith, as is the development of gospel-centered leaders. In practice this led ECO to offer the Elder Leadership Institute (ELI). ELI is to develop and support spiritual leadership for the church by training ruling elders and pastors (teaching elders). The goal “is transformation, not simply information.” The program is a 15-month engagement that includes attendance at an on-site, five-day immersion and depends on the Holy Spirit. Four current CHPC Session members have registered in ELI and will be attending Whitworth University in Spokane, Washington, this July 7-12. Please be praying for Drew Smith, Eileen Boyle, Janet Dumford, and Jan Johnson as they seek to follow God and fully engage with the resources of the new denomination.

ECO Approved by International Body

ECO is also continuing to grow and develop. At the end of May, ECO was received by the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC). “The WCRC is a landmark effort to unite Christians for common witness and service to the world.”

Upcoming Classes

For all seeking further information about ECO and the exciting opportunities ahead please attend some of the information sessions and classes offered this summer and fall:

ECO – Lift Off! Essential Tenets of the Faith, Wednesday, July 31, 7-9:30 pm. Childcare available please call Michelle if you need childcare.

Why Plant Churches? Sundays during the Foundation Hour, August 4, 11, 18 & 25

ECO – Lift Off! Essential Tenets of the Faith, Sundays during the Foundation Hour, August 4, 11 & 18

Membership Exploration, Sundays during the Foundation Hour, September 1, 8 & 15

Additional announcements, with more description, and other class offerings will be published in Hot Off the Press.

Please continue to pray for our Cincinnati Presbytery (PCUSA), ECO, and this dismissal process. Our desire to join ECO continues to be focused on seeking the best denominational affiliation to fulfill God’s mission for CHPC. We are continually humbled by God’s faithfulness and provision. We, your Session, are filled with joy and great anticipation as we daily commit our body to being a church without walls: connecting, serving, and celebrating!

With peace and joy,

Drew Smith	Chappie Chapman	
Rob Bechtel	Eileen Boyle	Joe Brooks
Janet Dumford	Bob Faul	Jan Johnson
Fran Kelley	Beth Killian	Charlie Lethander
Cathy Lowe	Chuck Marihugh	Terri Strasinger
Galen Warren	Thom Warren	Greg Winget