

March 21, 2013

Dear Member,

Our discernment journey has reached another milestone. The D-Team from CHPC and the Presbytery has completed its recommendation.

The initial plan was to present formally the recommendation at the "Town Hall" Meeting on April 14, 2013. However, the D-Team recognized that there is value to allowing all members to have time to digest and prayerfully consider the recommendation before engaging in discussion of it. A copy of the recommendation is included in this packet and will also be placed on the website for your convenience.

The Town Hall meeting on **April 14th (4-6 pm)** will give you the opportunity to seek clarification or ask questions of the D-Team. Session will also be presenting at this meeting to talk about the next steps in the process. On the enclosed chart, please note that we have filled in specific dates for upcoming events now that we are moving into the third phase of this process.

To clarify the decision making process

- D-Team has made a recommendation
- Session will discuss and act upon the Discernment Team recommendation, determining whether further study of other Reformed denominations is merited on April 10th
- Session will report to the congregation the next steps in the discernment process at the April 14th Town Hall Meeting.
- Session will make a recommendation to the congregation on our denominational affiliation on May 1st.
- The Congregation will vote to approve or disapprove Session's recommendation for our denominational affiliation June 2nd.

God has been faithful to us in leading us through this discernment journey. We will continue to follow His leading in the weeks leading up to June 2nd.

On June 2nd, only official members of CHPC will be allowed to vote. We have placed the "official" roll at the Front Desk. Please stop by and double check that your name is there! We do have two membership classes that will take place during April and May.

Thank you for your willingness to pray for us and with us and to share honestly your thoughts and concerns throughout this process.

Humbly Yours,

The CHPC Discernment Team

Drew Smith

Mark Klusmeier

Janet Dumford

Heather Lethander

**Recommendation
of the
Presbytery of Cincinnati/College Hill Presbyterian Church Discernment Team
to the Session and Congregation of College Hill Presbyterian Church**

Released March 21, 2013

The Discernment Team celebrates the ministry and mission of College Hill Presbyterian Church. CHPC has had a rich history within the PC(USA), the College Hill community, the larger Cincinnati community, and beyond. It is easy to see where the Lord has been working through the people of this congregation. The question with which we as a Discernment Team have wrestled, (as have you) is whether the PC(USA) remains the best denominational affiliation for CHPC to fulfill its mission within God's Kingdom.

Through transparency, honesty, and a willingness to speak clearly and listen intently, the Discernment Team has had tremendous discussions and felt the presence of the Lord. We have sought to approach the issues with humility, acknowledging our own brokenness. The presence of God has been in the midst of this entire process. The D Team appreciates that the congregation has actively participated in sharing their various viewpoints on both sides of the issue. We have listened to you, the congregation, share your concerns, your grief, and your deep desire faithfully to follow Jesus Christ. We have been moved by the passionate love for the Lord expressed in many of your words, spoken or written during this process.

There are two potential outcomes of the discernment process, 1. Restored fellowship with the PC(USA) or 2. Dismissal from the PC(USA) in a way that honors Jesus Christ and strengthens both the congregation and the Presbytery. In either case, it is important to remember that we are all brothers and sisters in Christ and it is the hope of the Presbytery that we can all continue towards a transformed relationship.

After prayerful consideration and studied discernment, while listening to the Holy Spirit and the congregation, it seems clear that CHPC has not been able fully to commit to its mission because of ongoing struggles with the denomination. Furthermore, we believe that the relationship with PC(USA) is unlikely to be transformed meaningfully in the foreseeable future without significant damage to the ministries of CHPC. Therefore, the Discernment Team unanimously recommends that College Hill Presbyterian Church seek dismissal from PC (USA) to another Reformed body.

All members of the team realize and recognize the loss which the Presbytery of Cincinnati will encounter should the congregation decide, in fact, to seek dismissal from PC(USA). Likewise, CHPC has enjoyed a rich 160-year history within this denomination and its predecessor. To leave has an emotional component as well. It does not matter whether a person is from College Hill or some other PC (USA) church, we know that a loss will be felt. Grief will occur. The peace, unity, and purity of the Church is held in high regard, and no one is exempt from feeling that something is now missing.

We each experienced a sense of sadness and grief in making this decision. Nevertheless, the D Team knows and understands that College Hill will continue to be a part of the "Capital 'C' Church," the Body of Christ, regardless of the ultimate outcome of this process. There are and will continue to be opportunities for ongoing connections with other churches within the area, Presbyterian and otherwise. All involved remain brothers and sisters in Christ. We believe that there will be a sense of renewal within the congregation with this transition because you will be able to fully commit to fulfilling God's will and your mission.

Over the next several months, your Session will continue to lead you through this process. They have been examining other Reformed Presbyterian bodies to determine the best fit for CHPC should you decide for dismissal. We trust that you will continue to follow God's leading and direction. It is our hope and prayer that everyone comes through this process as 'whole' as possible. We mean this not merely in regard to numbers, attendance, votes, etc., but also in regard to people's "health and wellness." In other words, we pray for God's "Shalom" to be present in your decision and your future, wherever it may lie.

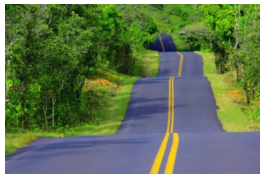
The next steps include a Town Hall meeting, where this report will be discussed. Also, the Session of CHPC continues to consider where CHPC might best fit in another Reformed body. There will be plenty of opportunities for all involved to ask, "What does all this mean? Where do we go from here?" And perhaps everyone might also reflect on "How did we get here?"

We expect that there is joyful anticipation within the congregation as CHPC moves forward with next steps. While lament is present, we are a people of hope. We do not expect that things will 'return to normal.' Rather, being a Resurrection People, we pray that our future will be transformed by the Holy Spirit, for the sake of Christ Jesus, to the glory of God.

Finally, although we have recommended that CHPC seek dismissal, this decision is not ours, but is for your Session and ultimately your congregation to make with God's guidance. In the event that you determine that the call of CHPC remains within PC(USA), we stand ready to assist you and your Session in preparing a covenant of reaffirmation and reconciliation with the Presbytery of Cincinnati and PC(USA).

His Grace and Peace to you all.

Rev. Amy Duiker
Elder Janet Dumford
Elder Mark Klusmeier
Elder Heather Lethander
Rev. Kevin Murphy
Elder Dale Roush
Rev. Drew Smith
Elder Kevin Waters



STEPS... on our spiritual journey of discovery.

THE DISCERNMENT PROCESS SUMMARY

On **March 18, 2013**, the Discernment Team met to finalize the recommendation. Although the original plan was to release the recommendation at the Town Hall, the Team felt that it was important that members of the Session and congregation have the opportunity to reflect prayerfully on the recommendation before the Town Hall discussion. Accordingly, earlier release has been planned.

Congregation members will have the opportunity to ask questions of the D Team members and Session at the April 14th meeting.

Discernment Team		CHPC Discernment How the Congregation is Involved	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Members asked to provide feedback on denominational issues through Fireside Charts, Online survey, email, US Mail and direct conversation with CHPC D Team to discuss concerns, sensitivities and questions.	01/13/2013 – 02/03/2013
		<input type="checkbox"/> Members participated in "Discernment Forum" to share opinions with the D-Team.	02/17/2013
<input type="checkbox"/> Fifth Meeting - The D Team will discuss the concerns, sensitivities and questions of congregation members.	2/25/13	§ Members are encouraged to participate in Basics Matter Class and additional classes related to our discernment during Foundational Hour.	Ongoing
		§ Review Weblinks for Learning www.chpc.org/denomination-resources	Ongoing
<input type="checkbox"/> The D Team will create a final recommendation to share with the Congregation and Presbytery.	3/19/2013	<input type="checkbox"/> Session will host speakers to tell their stories about the discernment process and their denomination decisions. The congregation is invited to attend.	3/6/2013 3/11/2013 3/20/2013
<input type="checkbox"/> The D Team final recommendation is distributed to the Session and the Congregation.	3/21/2013	§ Attendees are asked to verify their membership status at the front desk and to enroll in membership classes if necessary.	Ongoing
§ The D Team will formally present to the Congregation and Session their recommendation on denominational affiliation at a "Town Hall" Meeting at CHPC. Session will discuss the next steps of the process.	4/14/2013	§ Session will discuss and act upon the Discernment Team recommendation, determining whether further study of other Reformed denominations is merited	4/10/ 2013
		<input checked="" type="bullet"/> CHPC enters a season of fasting and prayer to consider our vote.	4/14/2013– 6/2/2013
		<input checked="" type="bullet"/> Congregation members are invited to address session regarding denominational affiliation.	4/17/2013
		<input checked="" type="bullet"/> Session will make a recommendation to the congregation on our denominational affiliation	5/1/2013
<input checked="" type="bullet"/> D team will present final report including outcome of congregational vote to Presbytery at September meeting	September 2013	<input checked="" type="bullet"/> CHPC will hold a Congregational Meeting for final vote on denominational affiliation.	6/2/2013

This step is done

§ **We're working on this step**

● **Yet to be Done**

Only page 2 of the chart is printed here. For the full summary of our discernment journey, see the website.