



October 15, 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The members of your Session have been in prayerful discussion about the issues facing First Presbyterian Church San Antonio (FPC) in relationship to our denomination, the Presbyterian Church (USA) or PC(USA).

FPC has been a witness to the Lord Jesus Christ in San Antonio, the State of Texas, and indeed, throughout the world since 1846—claiming the saving grace of Jesus Christ and proclaiming the Scriptures as God’s reliable and authoritative Word. The vitality of our ministries, indeed our worship, witness, fellowship and work start and end with these core commitments.

In prayerfully seeking wisdom, we have considered these core questions:

- What would Christ have us do as we seek to fulfill His purpose at 4th and Alamo?
- How can we best live out our Reformed faith and continue to be Presbyterian?
- What next step will best ensure the future mission and ministry of FPC?

Reaching answers to these questions included prayer, your input in the church survey, complex analysis of ecclesiastical procedures and denominational alternatives, and difficult questions of civil and property law that vary by state, by presbytery and by church. Ultimately, after years of prayer, discussion, and input from our members, on October 12, 2015, the Session of FPC voted to recommend to the congregation that we leave the PC(USA) and join the ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians—a rapidly growing Reformed Presbyterian denomination.

We believe our denomination is not what it once was, and it has wandered from its biblical and confessional moorings. We are not alone in this belief. Hundreds of churches have left the PC(USA) in recent years and many others, like FPC, currently are in the process of determining how to respond to denominational changes. Even the Moderator of the PC(USA), Heath Rada, recently acknowledged that conservative churches are considering leaving the denomination because of the theological drift of the past 10 years; concerns over how the PC(USA) will find pastoral candidates who support the orthodox interpretation of Scripture; the denomination’s expenditure of funds; and the decline of membership.

These issues have reached 4th and Alamo. We have been losing members over the past three years over denominational issues. If we do nothing, we are concerned this trend will accelerate.

Many churches in Texas and in the country with whom we have had historical ties have joined ECO. In contrast to the theological concerns and membership declines within the PC(USA), we find ECO to be a vibrant, growing Presbyterian denomination which shares this church’s historical vision for teaching, evangelism and mission. We feel called to make this move, but this decision ultimately rests with you, the members of our congregation.

*(please see reverse)*

We encourage you to read carefully the materials we have provided based on our lengthy study. Seek and pray for wisdom regarding your decision in fellowship with others in open and honest dialogue.

As we proceed in these conversations, we also urge you to consider what is best for this church and future generations of members as we look out over the next 50 or even 100 years. We assure you that this decision has not come easily nor has it come quickly, but is the result of considerable prayer, study and deliberation. We recognize that leaving the PC(USA) may appear to be a major milestone. While the issues have become familiar to those of us on the Session, we understand that they may not be as familiar to many of you. For this reason, we have included additional information, denominational comparisons and frequently asked questions (FAQ's) that we identified during our study.

Please note these important upcoming dates:

- **A time for corporate prayer on October 20, 2015 at 5:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary.**
- **An informational meeting with time for questions/discussion: October 25, 12:15 p.m. in the Sanctuary.**
- **A Congregational Meeting to vote on this matter will be: November 1, 12:15 p.m. in the Sanctuary.**

“Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.”

~Philippians 1:1, 2

Yours in Christ,



N. A. Stuart, III, MD, Clerk of Session  
On behalf of the Session of First Presbyterian Church of San Antonio

*If you have questions, please contact any one of the elders listed below to have a personal conversation about the matters at hand. This is an important time of change in the life of our church.*

**Class of 2016**

Baker, Ron  
Crider, Roger  
DeKoch, Dirk  
Johnson, Buddy  
Maynard, Martha  
Ray, Tom  
Terry, Kelley  
Walthall IV, Walter

**Class of 2017**

Biggs, Brian  
Bunn, Chuck  
Figueroa, Sheila  
Lyons, Bill  
Meadows, Ellen  
Shelton, Rob  
Stephens, Barbara Anne  
Tichy, Elizabeth

**Class of 2018**

Buchek, Tres  
Carter, Dana  
McCaleb, Ben  
Park, John  
Patton, Frank  
Romano, Lady  
Spencer, George  
West, David

