

BRIEF TIMELINE OF THEOLOGICAL ISSUES IN THE PCUSA 1910-2015

- 1910 – Essential and Necessary Doctrines Defined; tension between fundamentalists and modernists
- 1924 – Auburn Affirmation – modernist response
- 1927 – Ordination is no longer based on national standards but presbytery local option
- 1936 – Orthodox Presbyterian Church founded under leadership of J. Gresham Machen
- 1965 – Last year denomination grew; 4.25 million members; the Presbyterian Lay Committee formed to expose and address the undermining of theological and moral standards.
- 1967 – *Book Of Confessions* replaces Westminster Confession as confessional standard of the church; Confession of 1967 added; New ordination vows adopted – “Scripture is God’s word to *you*.”
- 1973 – 260+ Congregations depart to form Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)
- 1978 – “Missions” (Great Commission around globe) redefined to “mission” (work of the church)
- 1978 – Definitive Guidance (wherein homosexuality a labeled “sin”) adopted by General Assembly; ordination of homosexuals prohibited; concurred by PCUS General Assembly in 1979
- 1981 – Mansfield Kaseman case – ordination approved even though he would not affirm “Jesus is God.” Evangelical Presbyterian Church Formed (EPC) in anticipation of Reunion.
- 1982 – Both the UPCUSA and the PCUS add the assertion of express denominational trust over all local church property. Few people in the PCUS were aware of the change as the focus was on the documents related to Reunion.
- 1983 – Reunion of UPCUSA (Northern Church) and PCUS (Southern Church). An 8 year window is open for PCUS churches to leave with their property.
- 1986 – General Assembly reaffirms 1978 Definitive Guidance;
- 1989 – The Covenant Fellowship of Presbyterians and Presbyterians United for Biblical Concerns merged to form Presbyterians for Renewal
- 1993 – Reimagining God event – “Sophia” worship; God is portrayed as female; the substitutionary atonement is rejected.
- 1993 – General Assembly reaffirms 1978 Definitive Guidance
- 1996 – Fidelity and Chastity (G-6.0106b) added to *Book of Order* as Amendment B – prohibits ordination of practicing homosexuals and other people who persist in other sexual sins
- 1997 – General Assembly votes to overturn Fidelity and Chastity; Amendment A rejected by presbyteries
- 2001 – General Assembly refuses to acknowledge “the singular saving lordship of Jesus Christ.” GA votes to overturn Fidelity and Chastity; Amendment 01A rejected by presbyteries

- 2001 – Confessing Church Movement arises – affirms authority of Scripture and Jesus as sole means of salvation; New Wineskins Movement develops
- 2006 – Peace, Unity and Purity (PUP) received and adopted; General Assembly issues Authoritative Interpretation to allow scruples over Fidelity and Chastity (effectively creating “local option”);
- 2007 – New Wineskins Association of Churches enters into relationship with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) to create pathway for exodus of churches;
- 2008 – General Assembly votes to overturn Fidelity and Chastity; Amendment B is rejected by presbyteries. But GA also voided all prior judicial rulings and Definitive Guidance on homosexuality; undoing 30 years of process and washing away the record of PJC rulings.
- 2010 – General Assembly votes to replace Fidelity and Chastity with milder language; Amendment 10A is approved by presbyteries; Pastors from seven large churches gather to express concern over decline in PCUSA and the Fellowship of Presbyterians begins to take shape.
- 2011 – Open letter to denomination from the seven large church pastors declaring PCUSA “deathly ill” and accompanying White Paper entitled “Time for Something New.” Fellowship of Presbyterians formed at large gathering in Minneapolis. Ordinations of non-celibate LGBTQ people begin contrary to scripture; departures from PCUSA accelerate; down to 1.75 million members (from 4.25 million in 1965) by 2013.
- 2012 – ECO: Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians formed in Orlando. (200 churches by 2015). Congregations also continue exodus from PCUSA to EPC which doubled in size between 2007 and 2012, from 180 to more than 400 congregations.
- 2104 – General Assembly approves overture to redefine marriage and Authoritative Interpretation to allow same-sex “marriage” ceremonies in PCUSA churches by PCUSA clergy in states where it is legal (civil law now dictates our polity, not Scripture). Amendment 14F passed in a majority of presbyteries and becomes effective June 21, 2015. The amendment preserves the right of clergy to not perform any marriage that is contrary to their understanding of the Scriptures. The PCUSA has officially arrived at the “everyone does what is right in his own eyes” position on marriage.
- 2015 – The Moderator of the PCUSA repeatedly preaches a sermon containing knowing error and is not held to account. On three occasions in January 2015, in videos you can watch on YouTube, the Moderator said that the Bible says we should take divorced people out of the sanctuary and stone them to death on the church steps. The Bible never says any such thing and when asked the Moderator admitted that he didn’t know exactly where the Bible said it but he was sure it did. Even when informed of his error, he continued to preach the same stump sermon in subsequent appearances.

The other pressing issues include:

- a growing acceptance of universal theology by the clergy
- support of abortion
- divestment from holdings in corporations whose products are used for “non-peaceful pursuits” by Israel
- social witness policies that are almost indistinguishable from the progressive agenda of the Democratic party
- staff leadership that does not reflect the values nor priorities of the people in the pews.