

Minutes of the Meeting Called by the Presbytery of San Francisco Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church - September 27, 2015

Under joint supervision of Walnut Creek Presbyterian Members, the Clerk of Session and Presbytery Tellers, congregational members registered and were issued ballots before the beginning of the meeting. Worship began at 9:30 am with scripture, singing, and a short reflection by Pastor Paul Dugan on WCPC's rich history in Walnut Creek and the Diablo valley.

The Presbytery Moderator of the Called Meeting, the Reverend Keenan Kelsey, called the meeting to order at 9:56am, for the purpose of voting to decide if Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church (WCPC) shall request dismissal from the PC(USA) to ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians. The Rev. Kelsey announced that a quorum was present and opened the meeting in prayer.

The Rev. Kelsey introduced the following leaders and guests to the congregation: the Rev. Katherine J. Runyeon, Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of San Francisco; the Rev. Dr. Jeff Hutcheson, Presbytery Pastor for Mission and Vision; the Rev. Victoria Wells, Presbytery of San Francisco Engagement Team Spokesperson; and additional Presbytery of San Francisco Engagement Team (PET) members: the Rev. Ray Campton, Member at Large; and the Rev. Jack Shriver, Honorably Retired.

WCPC Special Committee of the Congregation (SCC) Chair and ruling elder (re) David Meharg introduced the other members of the SCC: Mitch Boomer, the Rev. Paul Dugan, Pat Edgerton, William Herbert, Jim McClaskey, Karen Perkins, Chris Ritchey and Steve Wood. David also introduced WCPC Clerk of Session, Nancy Boomer, who will work with the Rev. Runyeon to record the minutes for this meeting.

The Rev. Kelsey spoke to the congregation about her hope that despite the outcome of the dismissal process, we will all strive to be the church modeled on the Body of Christ, living in spiritual unity.

The Rev. Wells spoke briefly about the Presbytery's deep regret that WCPC members and leaders felt called to seek dismissal. She stressed that the discernment process has been careful, long and deliberate. She then read the motion:

Shall Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church of Walnut Creek, California request dismissal from the Presbytery of San Francisco and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) under the terms of the agreement negotiated by the Presbytery Engagement Team and the Special Committee of the Congregation of WCPC, and upon dismissal, affiliate with the ECO, a Covenant Order of [*Evangelical*] Presbyterians?

Ruling Elder, David Meharg of Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church presented the Terms of Dismissal:

In accordance with the Policy for Reconciliation and Dismissal of Congregations, Presbytery of San Francisco (Revised June 2013), the Presbytery Engagement Team (PET) and WCPC's Special Committee of the Congregation (SCC) have agreed on the following key terms of dismissal for Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church:

1. That the congregation requests dismissal to ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (ECO), which the PET finds to be a Reformed denomination.
2. CARE OF PEOPLE
 - WCPC's Teaching Elders (Rev. Dr. Morgan Murray and Rev. Dr. Paul Dugan) have requested dismissal to ECO along with the Congregation.
 - The PET is putting provisions in place to assist members of the congregation who wish to maintain membership in a PC(USA) church.
3. CARE FOR PROPERTY
 - The payment from WCPC to the Presbytery for dismissal will be \$2,700,000, which includes:
 - Past due per capita payment of \$152,439
 - Future per capita payment of \$102,814
 - [Later calculations revealed that this figure does not cover 2015 or 2016 per capita assessments so the property assets contribution was reduced by those amounts and the total of \$2.7 mil remains the same.]*
 - Property assets value of \$2,444,747
 - The funding plan for payment is summarized as follows:
 - Reserves/Foundation: \$200,000
 - Disposition of 1865 Lacassie: \$2,500,000
 - The Presbytery will execute a quitclaim deed in favor of WCPC, waiving any interest in 1801 Lacassie Avenue (Sanctuary campus & Deacon's Cottage), 1865 Lacassie (apartment), and 1849 Lacassie (apartment) conditioned on WCPC remaining a member of ECO, or another Reformed denomination, for 5 years.

Moderator Kelsey invited the congregation to ask questions for clarification. Hearing none, she invited members to speak briefly to the motion. No members chose to speak.

Moderator Kelsey appointed the Rev. Runyeon to be head teller, and these persons to be tellers to facilitate the voting process: The Rev. Susan Ashton, Honorably Retired; Ms. Nancy Boomer, ruling elder and Clerk of Session, WCPC; Ms. Cindy Cake, ruling elder, Noe Valley Ministry, San Francisco; The Rev. Campton; The Reverend Diana Cheifetz, Member at Large; The Rev. Hutcheson; Ms. Esther Kim, ruling elder, Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church (LOPC); Mr. David Meharg; The Rev. Vincent Mok, teaching elder, Honorably Retired (and Presbytery Vice Moderator); Ms. Jean Olson, ruling elder, Old First Presbyterian Church, San Francisco; Mr. David Soohoo, ruling elder, Presbyterian Church in Chinatown, San Francisco; The Rev. Rosemary Steiz, Honorably Retired; John Templeton, ruling elder, St. John's Presbyterian Church, San Francisco; Sam Yoshioka, ruling elder, LOPC.

Moderator Kelsey gave instructions for voting to the congregation, instructed tellers to collect ballots, verified that all who wished to vote had done so, and then instructed the tellers to count the ballots and then report the results.

Following prayer, Moderator Kelsey recessed the meeting at 10:20am. Worship continued while ballots were counted.

Moderator Keenan Kelsey reconvened the meeting with prayer at 10:51am. The Moderator then read the following Tellers' Report:

Per WCPC records, there are 583 active members currently on the congregational rolls. Per the *Policy for Reconciliation and Dismissal of Congregations* of the Presbytery of San Francisco, at least 50% of the members must cast a ballot. To meet this requirement, there must be a minimum of 292 ballots cast.

Today there were 390 ballots issued to members and 358 ballots cast. The minimum for a quorum was met.

There were also advisory ballots cast and the collected information will be given to the leadership at WCPC. Those ballots do not affect the official vote but are still important information.

Again per policy, 75% of the members voting must vote in favor of dismissal for the request to be forwarded to the Presbytery.

Membership voting results:

Total ballots cast: 358

Necessary for adoption: 267

Ballots in favor of the motion: 342

Ballots opposing motion: 16

Abstentions: 0

Illegal / illegible ballots cast: 0

Moderator Kelsey announced that the motion had carried and that the request for dismissal would be forwarded to the Presbytery of San Francisco at its next meeting. She again shared the Presbytery's regret that WCPC and the Presbytery of San Francisco could not continue in witness and faith journeys together.

The Rev. Kelsey asked the Rev. Wells to come forward and explain what the final stages of the dismissal process would entail. The Rev. Wells announced the next steps of the dismissal process, including notice that the Presbytery of San Francisco would consider this request for dismissal at its next meeting on November 10, 2015, at First Presbyterian Church in Oakland, CA. The motion will be on the meeting agenda and must pass by a 2/3 majority. PET members will be at the meeting to speak in favor of the motion. She also informed WCPC members that each would be receiving a follow-up letter and added that PET members would be available after the meeting to answer questions and provide support to those who are grieving the outcome. She thanked members of the PET and SCC for their hard work.

The Rev. Hutcheson concluded by sharing his conviction that Jesus is leading us all to a new freedom and a new kingdom. He then closed the meeting with a prayer at 11:02 am. After a concluding hymn, Pastor Morgan Murray gave the blessing.

Nancy E. Boomer
Clerk of Session
Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church

Rev. Katherine J. Runyeon
Stated Clerk
Presbytery of San Francisco