PRESBYTERY OF SANTA BARBARA
REVENUE AND EXPENSE SUMMARY
2012

As of April 30, 2012

		Actual YTD	2012 Budget	% of Budget
REVENUE				
1	Ministry Share Pledges (at $70/church member)	111,464	437,000	25.51%
2	Synod Grant	0	0	n.a.
3	Other income	0	500	0.00%
4	Interest Income	142	500	28.33%
5	Hearts and Hands pledges	8,563	72,500	11.81%
6	Front Porch Campus Ministry support raised by the Board	29,018	49,500	58.62%
7	IMPACT support raised by the Board	16,756	35,500	47.20%
8	**Total Revenue**	$165,942	$595,500	27.87%
EXPENSE - OPERATIONS				
9	**Presbytery Operations**			
10	Office Expense	14,535	33,250	43.71%
11	Meeting expense	1,175	1,630	72.09%
12	Debt Service/License/Fees	6,008	25,000	24.03%
13	GA Commissioners	248	6,500	3.82%
14-20	**Staff Expense**	106,263	266,813	39.83%
21	**Ministry Committees (mandated)**			
22	Committee Preparation for Ministry	241	1,000	24.12%
23	Committee on Ministry	0	500	0.00%
24	**Subtotal Operations**	128,470.64	334,693	38.38%
EXPENSE - THE VISION OF THE CHURCH IN MISSION				
25	**Mandated Church Loans/Debt Service/Property Tax**			
26	Grover Beach GA Loan	10,434	31,302	33.33%
27	Paso Robles GA Loan	13,502	40,505	33.33%
	Property Taxes	1,352	0	
28	**Church Mission/Ministry Grants (Hearts and Hands)**	8,563		
29	Templeton Ministry Grant	0	4,500	0.00%
30	Word of Life Ministry Grant	0	14,500	0.00%
31	Paso Robles Ministry Grant (SESLOC loan)	19,793	48,000	41.24%
32	Nipomo Ministry Grant	1,500	4,500	33.33%
33	Lay Leader Training	0	6,000	0.00%
34	**Ministry Committees**			
35	Pastors' Retreat	-565	1,500	-37.67%
36	**Church in the World Committee**			
37	Front Porch Campus Ministry	35,018	69,500	50.39%
38	IMPACT Youth Ministry	16,756	38,500	43.52%
39	Missions Conference	0	2,000	0.00%
40	**Subtotal Church in Mission**	106,352	260,807	
41	**TOTAL EXPENSE**	$234,822	$595,500	39.43%
42	**Deficit or Surplus**	-43,317.63	0	

1. What elements unite us as a presbytery?

all ages
all children of God
care for each other
care for other people
commitment
commitment to youth and to children
community
conflict (healthy)
connectedness
constitution
core values
creeds
diversity
education
elder
friendships
geography
grace
heritage
history
Holy Spirit
identity with presbytery
just being a Presbyterian
love for Christ
meetings
ministry
mission
polity; form of government
property/finance debt
reformed tradition
relationships
representation
scripture
shared resources
struggles
theology
witness
worship

2. What obstacles divide us?

anger
communication
complexity of issues
connection to PCUSA
decentralization of authority
decline
definition of Reformed
differences between pastor and members
differing definitions of leadership
dissemination of information from presbytery
diversity
egos
essential tenets
factions
focus on peripherals
frustration – polity
gay issue
general assembly
generational issues
geography – too big
interpersonal relationships
lack of clarity, transparency
lack of trust
like-minded committees exclude others
lordship of Jesus vs. universalist
ordination standards
perception of differences
personal agendas
political issues
power plays
presbytery
pride
property issues
silence on issues
societal issues/secular pressures
suffering/sin/our own brokenness
theology
unwillingness to compromise
unwillingness to release personal agendas
views on authority of scripture

3. Is the Presbytery worth saving and, if so, how can it be saved?

YES
we can do more united than divided
but if it doesn't, God's work will continue
we have a history together of doing Christ's work
but are we compromising too much to keep together?
it's a better witness to save it
but not in present form, something must change

NO
if the decisions alienate 1/3 or more of our members
differing beliefs on authority of scripture too great

HOW
non-geographic presbyteries might help
take our time
need more diversity on committees
slow down the process
consider people's gifts for ministry
we need to listen better and have more forums for listening
better communication and information flow
come together more often to build bridges
more education about church government
first recognize the dichotomy in our presbytery
lots more dialogue
undergird the presbytery with prayer

Love, Grow & Share With Us

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
4575 Auhay Dr.
Santa Barbara, California 93110
805-967-6327
Fax: 805-967-9530
E-mail: office@standrewspcusa.org

Dr. Brett A. Becker, Pastor

April 19, 2012

Presbytery Council
c/o Rev. Jan B. Armstrong
Executive Presbyter
Presbytery of Santa Barbara
6067 Shirrell Way
Goleta, CA 93117

Re: Recommendation to form a Union Presbytery with the Presbytery of the West of the Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians

Dear Council Members:

We have received and reviewed your letter dated March 20, 2012, and the attached Draft #1, Plan of Union for the Union Presbytery of Santa Barbara ("Plan of Union"). This letter is in response to your request for feedback prior to your scheduled meeting on April 23, 2012. While we have not been provided nearly enough time in the last 30 days to review, discuss and, most importantly, pray about the document's many implications, we are nevertheless united in expressing our deep sadness and overwhelming concerns about the wide spread impacts of the proposed Plan of Union on our congregation, the Presbytery and each of the congregations in the Santa Barbara Presbytery.

We have outlined some of our concerns, questions, and requests for more information below. We request that the Presbytery Council consider these concerns, questions and requests for more information and respond to us in writing prior to the May 5, 2012 Presbytery meeting. For documents requested, we will reimburse the Presbytery for the copying costs. We renew a prior request to the Presbytery Stated Clerk for video recording of the May 5 meeting, in order to inform the concerned members of our congregation who are unable to attend the meeting at a distance in San Luis Obispo.

Additionally, we formally request that this letter be included in the record and minutes of the May 5, 2012 presbytery meeting, and the record and minutes of the June 2, 2012 presbytery meeting. In a spirit of sharing and dialogue with others within the Presbytery community, we have copied this letter by email to the Presbytery Minister Members, Commissioned Lay Pastors and Clerks of Session.

1. Concerns:

   a. Premature. Any vote on a Plan of Union is premature and should be delayed until at least September, 2012. The Plan of Union seeks to make a binding and permanent relationship with another denomination, the Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians (ECO). The Plan of Union, if approved, will permanently change the nature of the Santa Barbara Presbytery and will have an impact on every congregation and its teaching elders within the Presbytery. Yet the information provided about ECO and the Presbytery of the West of ECO (PWECO) is scant and unverified. ECO is a brand new denomination, and no congregations have yet joined ECO. The ECO Polity document, 3.0102 Membership states:

      > "The members of the presbytery are its congregations, pastors installed in service to member congregations, pastors serving in validated ministries, and pastors honorably retired. Ordinarily, a presbytery shall be constituted of at least 10 but no more than 20 congregations, and geographically connected (affinity networks are non-geographically connected groups [see 5.0201])."

      Your March 20 letter says that "The Final draft will also go to the Presbytery of the West of ECO for their final review and consideration." Does the PWECO exist? What churches are in the PWECO? Who will review the Final Draft and make the decisions for PWECO? How can the teaching elders and commissioners at the June 2 Presbytery meeting make a proper and adequate determination that the PWECO is a "comparable council or governing body" and a "reformed body" as required by G-5.04? Will the pastors and representatives from the member churches of PWECO be present so that our commissioners can meet and hear from them at the May 5 Presbytery meeting? Much more information is needed, some of which we have requested below.

      Also, has the Synod been consulted? Has the Synod and its Executive/Stated Clerk provided feedback or guidance about the Plan of Union? Has guidance been sought about the polity issues from the PCUSA GA Stated Clerk? What guidance and comments have been received? How can a plan with wide ranging and permanent implications

be properly and fairly adopted without diverse representation and joint consultation between all parties?

The need to know more in order to discern and pray far outweighs a timeline to vote on the Plan of Union before GA2012 (June 30 – July 7). Several key issues which impact the Plan of Union will be debated and voted upon at the GA, including non-geographic presbyteries, ordination standards, property issues and the Overtures sent from this Presbytery. Drafting and voting on a Plan of Union prior to the GA is premature and creates unnecessary stress on the members of the Presbytery and congregations. Additionally, ECO's next organizational meetings are not scheduled to take place until August 2012. More information about ECO would likely be available after August.

We therefore request that any further discussion or vote on the Plan of Union be cancelled or at least postponed until the September 22, 2012 scheduled presbytery meeting, at the earliest.

b. Non-Geographic Presbytery. The Plan of Union appears to create an unconstitutional non-geographic presbytery, outside of the bounds of the district of the Santa Barbara Presbytery. G-3.0301 of the Book of Order defines the area of all presbyteries as "within a certain district and is composed of all congregations and teaching elders within that district."

The Standing Rules of the Presbytery of Santa Barbara set the Presbytery boundaries: "The Presbytery of Santa Barbara, organized on December 1, 1896, is the organizational unit and seat of the original authority of the Presbyterian Church (USA) realized by the convocation of all ministers and elders representing churches and ministers *within the counties of Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo in the State of California*."

The geographic nature of the presbytery was reaffirmed by this Presbytery at the February 11, 2012 presbytery meeting, when the Presbytery passed an overture to the 220th General Assembly to insert a new section G-3.0301d to allow a presbytery to receive member churches from outside its geographic boundaries. The PWECO (although not yet formed) is proposed to be one of three ECO presbyteries nationwide, including several states within its bounds. Does the Union Presbytery of Santa Barbara intend to receive PWECO congregations from outside of Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties? If so, explain how that can legally be accomplished.

c. Both PCUSA and ECO. Contrary to what is stated in the Motion and Plan of Union, the effect of the Plan of Union is to make all churches (and teaching and ruling elders) of the union presbytery churches belong to each denomination, both PCUSA and ECO. G-5.04 provides that a union presbytery unites both presbyteries (and the churches which make up the presbyteries) into a union presbytery. Further G-5.0401 states that "[t]he union presbytery shall be subject to the constitution of each denomination represented in the union." The memberships in the uniting denominations remain, which has been the case historically. This distinction is explained in G-17.0201d. of the 2009-11 Book or Order: "The membership of the union presbytery shall consist of all minister members of each uniting presbytery and all the churches..." G-17.0201e: "The churches of a union presbytery shall be considered union churches belonging to each denomination. Each particular church shall be reported to each General Assembly and synod of jurisdiction..." G-17.0201f provides, "Ministers of the union presbytery shall be full and responsible members of each denomination."

As a result, many churches (and teaching and ruling elders) will automatically become (or remain) members of a denomination against their desires, and be required to comply with constitutional provisions and standards of conduct of another denomination. This impacts all churches currently in the Presbytery.

Are the 6 churches which are in discussions about leaving the PCUSA willing to remain in the PCUSA (and become congregations of ECO) in order to be part of the Union Presbytery? A Union Presbytery will require the 30 congregations currently in the Santa Barbara Presbytery become members of a new denomination, without congregational vote and with multiple known and unknown complications. Why are we considering making 24 churches adapt to a foreign constitution instead of allowing the few complainants to simply leave?

For congregations like St. Andrew's, if the Plan of Union is approved by the Santa Barbara Presbytery, we will be considered ECO congregations, despite our desire to remain faithful to the PCUSA heritage, form and Constitution. Does Council intend to tell the members of our congregation (and all the members of all the congregations in the Presbytery) that they will all become members of ECO, and subject to the constitutions of both denominations? How does Council advise us as a Session to deal with the expected concerned reactions from our congregation?

d. No Place to Go. The Plan of Union states that "provisions will be made for congregations who do not believe they can, in good conscience, participate in the new Union Presbytery and abide by the presbytery standards of conduct." What provisions? PCUSA polity does not allow congregations to move to another presbytery and a presbytery can't move a congregation to another presbytery without approval by the other presbytery, the Synod and action by GA. In reality, congregations who do not want to be in the Union Presbytery (and become ECO congregations) have no place to go. It's been suggested that congregations consider leaving the PCUSA to go to another denomination (such as UCC). Is this one of the "provisions" contemplated by the Plan of Union? What are the other "provisions?"

e. Polity Issues. The Plan of Union doesn't address one of the major issues of contention within the presbytery: ordination standards and constitutional authority. Will the Union Presbytery apply the ordination requirements in the PCUSA Book of Order (G-2.0402) or the ECO Polity (2.0101)? We are particularly concerned that, as members of the Union Presbytery, and therefore automatically members of ECO, that our Session will be instructed and required to be bound by and apply the ECO Essential Tenets and ordination standards, or risk disciplinary action.

G-5.0401of the Book of Order provides that a union presbytery is subject to both constitutions. If one constitution is mandatory and the other permissive regarding a particular issue, then the mandatory provision will apply. If there are conflicting mandatory provisions, the Union Presbytery must overture the GA and ECO Synod to resolve the conflict. What is the Council's position on whether the ordination standards between the PCUSA and ECO differ? Does Council have a position on whether one provision is mandatory and the other permissive, or are both mandatory? Does Council plan to include its position in the Plan of Union? Does Council intend to recommend to the Santa Barbara Presbytery to vote to request an authoritative interpretation of this issue? Will Council wait for the determination on such a request before moving forward with a vote on the Plan of Union? What ordination standards will be used for the examination by the Union Presbytery of "all Teaching Elders either being ordained for service or entering the Presbytery," as provided in provision 8 of the Union Plan? Will the Union Presbytery require the PWECO pastors to be examined by the full Union Presbytery before becoming members of the Union Presbytery? Does the Plan of Union (provision 7) contemplate that all PWECO pastors shall automatically be "considered to be engaged in a validated ministry, within the meaning" of G-2.0503a" of the PCUSA Book of Order?

2. Additional Questions:
   a. Who are the 6 congregations of the Presbytery of Santa Barbara, which have initiated internal discussions about leaving the PCUSA (as stated in the second paragraph of your March 20, 2012 letter)?
   b. Have any of these 6 congregations voted on or scheduled a vote to leave the PCUSA? If so, which congregations? If any congregational meetings have been scheduled, what are the dates of those meetings?
   c. How has the Presbytery (through Council, the Executive Presbyter and/or any officers or committees) responded to the concerns of these 6 congregations? Have any commissions or committees been formed to counsel or advise these congregations in their discernment process for leaving the PCUSA?
   d. How many congregations are members of the Presbytery of the West of ECO (PWECO)? Where are these congregations located (address, city, state)?
   e. What are the geographical borders of PWECO? Do the geographic borders of PWECO come within the geographic borders of the Presbytery of Santa Barbara?
   f. Where will meetings of the Union Presbytery occur? Will such meetings ever be outside Ventura, Santa Barbara, or San Luis Obispo counties? Will meetings of the Union Presbytery be outside of California?
   g. If the geographic borders of PWECO are outside of the borders of the Presbytery of Santa Barbara, explain how the Union Presbytery can be formed legally within the provisions of the Book of Order.
   h. What is the general mission and benevolence program of ECO and PWECO? Who are the world wide mission partners of ECO and PWECO?
   i. What is the educational program and curriculum of ECO and PWECO?
   j. What are the peacemaking programs of ECO and PWECO?
   k. What are the disaster assistance programs of ECO and PWECO?
   l. What are the children's advocacy programs of ECO and PWECO?
   m. What are racial ethnic and women's ministries of ECO and PWECO?
   n. What are the leadership development programs of ECO and PWECO?
   o. What loan programs (like PILP) are available to congregations through ECO and PWECO?
   p. What insurance programs are available to congregations through ECO?
   q. What is the date of the next meeting of the PWECO? What is the date of the next meeting of the Synod of ECO?
   r. The Plan of Union (provision 4) says that each congregation will be responsible for "for other fund requests" from higher councils. Does this mean that our congregation will be required to pay the ECO 1% per capita?
   s. Has Council looked at and considered the plan of union provisions set forth in G-17.0200 of the 2009-11 Book of Order?

t. Will the Union Presbytery of Santa Barbara form a corporation? Have articles of incorporation been drafted? Will any property from any congregations be transferred from any congregations to the Union Presbytery? Will any property from the Presbytery of Santa Barbara be transferred to the Union Presbytery?
u. Have Standing Rules for the Union Presbytery been drafted? Will the Standing Rules of the current Santa Barbara Presbytery apply? Will those standing rules be consistent with both the PCUSA and ECO polity and fulfill all the functions of a presbytery as defined in both PCUSA and ECO polity?
v. The Plan of Union (provision 2) states that the Union Presbytery will "routinely grant, after a fair and reasonable process, congregations within the Union Presbytery permission to transfer their denominational membership" to ECO. Since all congregations within the Union Presbytery will be members of both PCUSA and ECO, why would congregations need to transfer to ECO?
w. What does "routinely grant" mean? What specific considerations will be required by the Union Presbytery to allow transfer of a congregation to any non-PCUSA denomination?
x. Has the Santa Barbara Presbytery developed and made available to congregations a Gracious Dismissal Policy, as required by the 218th General Assembly "Commissioners' Resolution on Urging A Gracious, Pastoral Response to Churches Requesting Dismissal from the PC(USA)" ("Commissioners' Resolution")?
y. Have the principles set forth in the Commissioners' Resolution been considered in preparing a Gracious Dismissal Policy for the Presbytery?
z. What committee or group has been authorized by the Presbytery to draft the Presbytery's dismissal policy referenced in provision 2 of the Plan of Union? Who are the members of the committee or group drafting the dismissal policy?
aa. When does Council expect the Dismissal Policy to be presented to the Santa Barbara presbytery for consideration and vote?

3. Request for More Information.
   a. Provide a copy of the constitution of ECO.
   b. Provide the address and phone number for the ECO office, and names of the corporate officers (including the chief executive officer) and staff.
   c. Provide the address and phone number for the PWECO office, and names of the corporate officers (including the chief executive officer) and staff.
   d. Provide a list of the names and addresses of all of the congregations which are members of the PWECO, and the effective membership dates.
   e. Provide a list of the individuals who are members of the governing council of the PWECO.
   f. Provide copies of the membership agreements between PWECO and the member congregations of PWECO.

   g. Provide a copy of the Articles of Incorporation of ECO showing the date and state of incorporation. If the state of incorporation is other than California, provide a copy of the Statement and Designation by Foreign Corporation form filed by ECO with the California Secretary of State, and a copy of the Certificate of Qualification issued by the California Secretary of state authorizing ECO to transact business in the State of California.
   h. Provide a copy of the IRS Determination Letter showing the tax exempt status of ECO.
   i. Provide a copy of the Articles of Incorporation of the PWECO showing the date and state of incorporation. If the state of incorporation is other than California, provide a copy of the Statement and Designation by Foreign Corporation form filed by PWECO with the California Secretary of State, and a copy of the Certificate of Qualification issued by the California Secretary of state authorizing Presbytery of the West of ECO to transact business in the State of California.
   j. Provide a copy of the Bylaws, Standing Rules, Manual of Operations, Budget, Financial Statements, Personnel Policies, Pension fund policies of PWECO.
   k. Provide copies of the Minutes of all presbytery meetings of PWECO.
   l. Provide a copy of the Standards of Conduct of ECO and PWECO.

We appreciate Council's openness to feedback and suggestions, and sincerely hope that each member of Council will review and give due consideration to this letter and all of the concerns and questions expressed. We also thank Council in advance for considering our request that any further discussion or vote on the Plan of Union be cancelled or at least postponed until the September 22, 2012 scheduled Presbytery meeting, at the earliest. To respond to this letter or to make arrangements to provide the copies requested above, please contact Sandy Thoits, Clerk of Session at standrewsclerk@gmail.com . We will continue to pray for the Presbytery and everyone involved in the discernment process for the future of our community in Christ.

Yours in Christ,

St. Andrew's Session

Dr. Brett Becker (Pastor), Tom Brashears, Terry DiMizio, Elaine Grimmessey, Chris Hoeckley, Willy Hughes, Lindy Moore, Marie Sue Parsons, Mike Shinn, Linda Sorensen, Sandy Thoits (Clerk of Session), Rachel Tobler, Ann Zylstra

We, the following Minister Members of the Santa Barbara Presbytery agree with and support this letter and the concerns and requests expressed.

Rev. Edwin Aspinwall
Honorably Retired

Rev. James Blades
Pastor
First Presbyterian Church
San Luis Obispo

Rev. Robert A. Crouch
Pastor
Pismo Beach Community Presbyterian Church

Dr. Harold Englund
Honorably Retired

Rev. Eugenia Gamble
Pastor
Nipomo Community Presbyterian Church

Rev. Luanne Griguoli
Honorably Retired

Rev. Suzanne Malloy
Minister at Large

Rev. Ann Martel
Honorably Retired

Rev. Judith Muller
Associate Pastor
First Presbyterian Church
Santa Barbara

cc: All Presbytery Minister Members, Commissioned Lay Pastors and Clerks of Session (by email)

From Elder Milt Jantzen (Grover Beach)
3/21/12

Have studied the Presbytery Council plan document & transmittal letter and I feel they're really good. They are comprehensive, collegial--intending to honor the diverse positions that churches and members certainly will have--and balanced. While there needs to be discussion of the details--especially regarding financial aspects--I believe this can take place at the 5/5 Presbytery meeting. I will be supporting the plan as laid out.

Someone has spent a good deal of time in preparing this plan; did you have to create it, or was there something available to draw from, I wonder? In any case, I think that it could serve as a good model document for any similarly-minded Presbytery.

I join you in the "hope and pray[er] that there might even be a building of trust and a reduction of fear within the presbytery."

From: Jeff Bridgeman [Jeff@elmopres.org]
Sent: Monday, April 23, 2012 8:43 AM
To: Michelle Holmes
Subject: Council info

Michelle,
I am truly sorry to miss the council meeting today, but I am on a much needed week off, and as tempted as I am to be there, I won't.

Yesterday though, I met with the Session of EMPC (Elmo) and we discussed this Union Presbytery Proposal. After understanding it more and discussing the implications of it, they agreed that we should go forward with it. But they are willing to postpone the vote on it so that more information, implications and details can be worked out. While they are concerned for the actions of GA, they aren't sold on the urgency of this action. One said, "This is just a first step." and they agreed with that.

My personal position is much the same. I would like to preserved those who are on the way out for as long as I can, but I know they will do what they will do. I am deeply concerned about the whole presbytery's ability function in the future and this process doesn't have to be divisive in it's process. So I too would be in favor of postponing the vote on this until the September meeting of Presbytery.

You'll be in my prayers today. I'd be glad to have this info shared with Council.
Jeff=

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

While I am identified as an ordained Teaching Elder of PC(USA) HR, I remain vitally concerned with the health and future of both PC(USA) and the Presbytery of Santa Barbara. I have served our Church with faithfulness as an ordained minister, serving in pastoral roles and serving as both consultant and as the Regional Liaison for World Mission for the final sixteen years of active ministry, retiring from University Presbyterian Church, Seattle (1999), and continuing service as the PC(USA) Regional Liaison for Europe and Central Asia until June 2010. I continue to serve as Parish Associate at Ojai Presbyterian Church.

I have received your lengthy document(s) referencing the current process within the Presbytery of Santa Barbara, for the creation of a UNION Presbytery. Your document frames many of the same concerns/questions that I have regarding both the need and the timing for creating a UNION Presbytery. After twenty-five years of ordained Baptist ministry, when I became a Teaching Elder member of the Seattle Presbytery, while serving in a pastoral role at UPC, Seattle, it was both Reformed theology and Presbyterian order that prompted this change. "Let everything be done decently and in order" was a refreshing change from some of the independent/"self-governing" experiences during my many years of ordained Baptist ministry.

I would concur with the conclusions of St. Andrews PC, Santa Barbara, when noting that the current issues being placed before the Presbytery of Santa Barbara, that there appears to be too much haste in calling for a decision before answers are formed for the serious questions that are legitimately being raised. I affirm the concerns expressed and would hope that the PROCESS that has led to the May/June 2012 vote will be delayed until there is time for an interpretation of the GA Assembly in July, and a more thorough discussion concerning the benefits we potentially lose. The current religious/ecclesiastical scene in American church life is reflected in its dissipation of focused energies into multiple expressions of individualism and programatic (sometimes explained as "missional") amateurism. THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING NEW WE NEED TO CREATE IN ORDER TO BECOME "MISSIONAL" CONGREGATIONS. The opportunities for "missional" expressions of ministry are either PRESENT or ABSENT in the DNA of our congregations and our Presbyteries.

Sincerely,

Arthur L. Beals
Honorably Retired

From the Desk

of Pastor James Blades

April 19, 2012

Council Members of the Santa Barbara Presbytery
Jan Armstrong, Executive Presbyter

Dear Council Members:

Ten years ago, I joined the PCUSA, transferring my ordination from a corresponding Baptist denomination, because I appreciated and felt enriched by the theological diversity of the PCUSA. Though I am orthodox and evangelical in my own *theological* perspective, I am glad to be the pastor of a church where folks who have different perspectives can embrace and even debate these differences without separating over them.

For the above and other reasons that colleagues have already so well iterated to you at length, I oppose the Council's Union Presbytery proposal as precipitous, premature and divisive. If it succeeds in being adopted by our presbytery, I will decline at all events to be regarded as a member of the Evangelical Covenant Order.

Sincere Regards,

James R. Blades, Pastor
First Presbyterian Church San Luis Obispo

Goleta Presbyterian Church

a community of faith
seeking to know and serve Jesus Christ
through committed hearts, open minds and willing hands

April 18th, 2012

Rev. Deborah Kehle, pastor

To: Council Members of the Santa Barbara Presbytery,
Jan Armstrong, Presbytery Executive

Re: Plan of Union Presbytery Document-DRAFT #1

Dear Council Members,

I thank you for getting the information out to the churches early enough that we could consider the proposals regarding the Plan of Union Presbytery with the ECO. I also thank you for requesting thoughts, feedback, and suggestions from *all* of the churches in our presbytery, as they relate to the document.

The Session of GPC has had the opportunity to review the document and discuss it together at our meeting of Tuesday, April 17th, 2012. We talked about the realities of what it would mean for a church like ours. Everyone had an opportunity to weigh in with their questions, comments, concerns or accolades (there were none.) Just a few of the questions that came up are as follows:

- Why we would want our presbytery to unite with ECO if our church itself does not want to become an ECO church?
- Is it even a constitutionally sound proposal?
- At its most basic level, my own question is this: *Is it even fair or right* for pastors and churches who want to leave the PCUSA to then come back and influence all of the remaining PCUSA churches with ECO's new and separate constitution, polity and essential tenets?

The Session and congregation of GPC is theologically diverse, yet grateful and pleased that we are known for our members' ability to live, love, worship and serve Christ together in community even in the midst of our differences. It is not always easy, yet we have a commitment to each other and respect our diversity even while clinging to our shared hope and faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

The proposed Plan of Union strikes me as unwise and potentially destructive for many of our churches in the Santa Barbara Presbytery.

I am a pastor who is committed to remaining part of the PCUSA. My hope and prayer is that Presbytery will drop the proposal and seek a more mutually agreeable solution. If any of our congregations believe they simply cannot remain in the PCUSA, there should be a fair and equitable procedure for leaving our presbytery and the PCUSA.

Thank you for having ears to hear my concerns.

In Christ,
Deborah Kehle, pastor

6067 Shirrell Way φGoleta, California 93117 φoffice 805-967-2131 φfax 805-967-8672 φwww.goletapres.org

May 8, 2012

To: All Members of Presbytery Council

From: Pastor Bruce Lethbridge, Orcutt Presbyterian Church

Re: Plan of Union vote - preparations for June 2

In my twenty years of membership in this Presbytery, I have developed a reputation as a person who is able and willing to speak with others "across the aisle" politically and theologically. As such, I received an earful at our Presbytery meeting last Saturday, and subsequently as well. I offer the following input to you with the hope that it helps as we navigate a very difficult time, and assure you that I am praying for you as those entrusted with leadership in this body.

The word that I keep hearing again and again is "railroaded", as in, this Plan of Union is being railroaded through the Presbytery. That word speaks of manipulation and disenfranchisement. I do not think this is happening in fact, but what is happening is that we have entered into a very fast process for a very great change, and this is upsetting to many people.

Presbyterians have traditionally taken their time when contemplating changes. That's part of our polity, to the extent that others outside our church make fun of us for what seem to them as long deliberations and complicated processes. However, the last two years have ushered in an era of sweeping and swift changes in our church. The nFog which is now part of our Constitution and recent constitutional amendments have shifted both our structures and our stances in a short time frame. The precedent for great and quick changes has been set. That does not make it easy to swallow. I'd like to reflect on how two particular constituencies with whom I have been in contact in recent days are reacting.

First, there are my colleagues who tend toward the liberal/progressive end of the spectrum. They are terrified of this proposal, which seems to some of them the death of the church they have known and loved. They also know that they are in a minority in this Presbytery, and that status never feels good. They know this Plan of Union may be approved here. They believe the fix is in, and the outcome of the vote inevitable. But most importantly, they do not believe that the Plan of Union diagram presented to the Presbytery on Saturday is truthful, and that they can remain PCUSA in the proposed Union Presbytery without being coerced by the ECO, and not just on ordination standards. Further, they are suspicious of the veracity of the "six churches" who are referenced in the documents created by Council but not named.

There are some things that could be done to address these concerns and bring clarity where misunderstanding currently exists. If representatives of these six churches were willing to speak on June 2, names and faces could be put on these brothers and sisters, and their concerns, expressed personally, could give weight to the importance of the vote being taken. Also, everything the Presbytery has received has come from the PCUSA side. Is it possible to have a representative of the ECO at the June 2 meeting, to answer questions and to express their enthusiasm for this plan?

I am aware of several presbyteries where a liberal majority has mistreated their evangelical minority. I am thankful not to be in that circumstance. But I also believe we must consider how we treat those who hold a minority status in our Presbytery. While we cannot give them what they want, we must give them the full rights they have under our system, the rights of voice, vote, and orderly written dissent or protest. As we approach our meeting on June 2 to vote on the Plan of Union, I want to be sure that our process is fair, respectful, and able to stand scrutiny. That last criteria is very important, because I believe it is a virtual certainty that if the Plan of Union passes it will be challenged from within our Presbytery for review by the courts/judicatories of the church.

There is another constituency that I have heard from in the last few days, that of retired clergy. What has impressed me in these conversations is that I've heard from people at both ends of the theological spectrum. Without speculating on their undoubtably diverse motives, I can say they are united in thinking this process is moving too quickly. This is not surprising, as they have spent most of their lives in a church which changed slowly. They are out of step with recent developments, and seem ill informed not just on the Plan of Union, but also the changes that have been brought about through nFog, etc. What I hear from them is that they want more information before they vote. Again, some kind of presentation before the vote on June 2 seems in order, to make another attempt to clarify the scope and implications of the Plan of Union. I don't think we need another small group session to hear each other's feelings. We need time for Q&A with those advocating the Plan to clarify issues so that people can make an intelligent decision. If that is not provided, I believe many of these retired colleagues will vote against the Plan.

I submit these comments to you with the hope that they will become part of the way God continues to guide our beloved Presbytery through some inevitably turbulent times. I assure you again of my prayers. I thank you for your leadership, and trust that all things are in the hands of the Lord of the Church. May God be glorified.

First Presbyterian Church
of SANTA BARBARA

April 20, 2012

Dear Ruric and Presbytery Council,

I am in strong agreement with the session at St. Andrew's and with Presbytery friends who have expressed their dismay with the Plan of Union you will bring to Presbytery on May 5 and, for a vote, on June 2. Our session has not had ample time to discuss it, so I will not speak for them. (Their initial reaction—and there is a diversity of opinions among them on the ordination standards issue—was strongly negative.) As one who loves the PCUSA and has served congregations since 1978, however, I hope you will hear what I have to say.

I have spoken on the floor of Presbytery about the value—the gift—of theological diversity in the church. I have tried to check myself; to be fair; to speak in a way that shows how much I value colleagues' wisdom and diverse views. I offered a sermon at the September 24, 2011 meeting with a message about friendship—that being friends in ministry is not only a vow we make at our ordination but a commitment that keeps us in relationship as colleagues and presbyters. (In short, being Presbyterian doesn't work without friendship.) At the February 11, 2012 meeting I offered a reasonable motion for a task force to explore creative ways to move forward together in that diversity. This motion, as you know, was met with tepid interest--and outright derision by some. If it was not clear to me beforehand, it became more than clear then that the Presbytery's course was set and that listening to other voices—even moderate voices--was past.

There is no question that the Union Presbytery proposal does not express real union. The proposal is wrong, beginning with the title—a misnomer if ever there was one. The proposal is about a majority having its way and getting its way. Union in the church cannot be achieved by majority rule. We make much of the authority of scripture. I find scant evidence in the Bible, however, favoring force over gentleness, grace, friendship, and love.

You have received excellent, well-researched, and deeply felt letters opposing your proposal. They have outlined numerous clear constitutional, practical, procedural, and personal concerns. I add my voice to theirs. I especially resonate with their plea for conscience. I find it ironic that those who wish to leave the PCUSA for ECO have, for years, spoken about and sought to have their freedom of conscience be respected. You, as a Council, are now proposing that those of us with deep allegiance and love for the PCUSA also be minister members of this new (or almost new) denomination. Personally I will not be associated with ECO in any way. Will you respect my freedom of conscience? It is in no way clear how you will do this. Every person who has voted in this Presbytery for freedom of conscience should vote No on the Union Presbytery proposal.

21 E. CONSTANCE AVENUE / SANTA BARBARA, CA 93105 / 805.687.0754 / FAX 805.687.5421

I strongly urge you to reconsider it. The opposition is strong. We may be a minority in the Presbytery, but we are vocal and we are determined. The constitutional provision for Union presbyteries assumes broad agreement among those uniting. That is not the case here. I understand that some churches are ready to leave the PCUSA. They are free to do that. An attempt to keep our Presbytery together in some nominal way, however, by forcing some of us to share membership in ECO does not accomplish this union.

One reason I am a Presbyterian is that I need to hear others' voices, voices that express God's truth and love. I have been glad to be a member of the Presbytery of Santa Barbara. How often I hear God's truth and love expressed by friends with theological stances different from mine! I need this. We need this. If there are positive steps to be taken, steps that further our mutual listening, learning, and witnessing, please know that I will support them.

Grace and peace,

Peter S. Buehler, Pastor

Nipomo Community Presbyterian Church

Rev. Eugenia A. Gamble, Pastor

Phone: (805) 473-8059
www.nipomopresbyterian.org

April 19, 2012

Presbytery Council
Santa Barbara Presbytery
c/o Moderator Ruric Nye

Dear Friends in Christ,

Oh what difficult days for you! I want you to know that each of you is in my prayers daily, moment by moment, as you make the decisions that affect the lives of so many people.

As some of you know, my initial response to the plan for union was dramatic and negative. After a couple of weeks to study and pray, I am calmer but no less emphatically opposed to this plan.

My primary concerns cluster in three areas: constitutional, process and pastoral.

Constitutionally, I believe that this proposed action is premature. Until ECO is fully constituted, has set its presbyteries' boundaries, has a list of member congregations, has held its first assembly and set up its ecumenical relationships, it can in no way be considered 'comparable' to the PCUSA. Only then could we constitutionally initiate a process of conversation, getting to know one another, building relationship and consensus to formulate a plan of union together. At this point there is nothing to which we can reasonably unite. How do you plan to address these issues?

Second, the plan for union states that, provisions will be made for those who do not wish or cannot in conscience participate in the union. The PCUSA constitution does not provide any way for that to happen. If union is actualized, all members and pastors would automatically be members of both denominations even if it is against their will. We do not, as yet, have non-geographic presbyteries so we would not be permitted to petition to become members of another PCUSA presbytery. What possible constitutional option would there be for us?

As to process, we have not had nearly enough time to talk this over. We have not had time to even know who the other churches are with whom we will be united. We don't know where or how far we would need to travel for presbytery meetings. We simply have not had time to get to know people, so how can we vote on a plan for union? With the information coming to us just before Holy Week, even those who knew it was coming, have not had time to fully take in the ramifications of this action. We have not had serious conversations about this over time in our presbytery. Why is this even necessary? Our own presbytery's policies on ordination standards would seem to have made that a non-issue. What can people do as a part of ECO that they cannot do as PCUSA?

Pastorally, I am at a loss as to how to help my congregation understand this when I don't think any of us understand it. Bless their hearts, these issues are not our issues. We are growing rapidly now. We have more than doubled our worship attendance and more than tripled our giving. Why on earth would we want to introduce these issues into a happily and intentionally theologically diverse congregation? We don't all agree on anything, and we don't feel the need to. How am I to deal with this without tearing my church apart? There is no way. I discussed the plan with my session at our last meeting and, frankly, they were dazed and confused. They didn't understand why or what the ramifications would be. They were horrified at the idea that they do not have the right to refuse if the presbytery adopts this plan. Poor things, they thought the biggest issue of controversy we had to deal with was who was going to put out the nametags! It is a pastoral nightmare and one from which the Nipomo Church might not survive. Literally. We have never asked people to choose sides here with regard to issues about which faithful, theologically sensitive believers disagree. It is not who we are.

I believe this is a needless and divisive action that will not get anyone what he or she thinks they want.

Personally, I have been a PCUSA pastor for half of my life. The PCUSA is my home. It is the context in which I have lived my faith for more than 30 years. I am loyal to my denomination, not out of some kind of habit or team spirit. I am loyal because it has been the nest from which I could soar in my love of Christ. I value our history, our traditions, our theological underpinnings, our collaborative spirit, our diversity, our Biblical integrity, our ecumenical relationships, our mission partnerships, our old ways and our new ways. I could no more leave the PCUSA than I could give up water. Please, in order to accomplish something that will never ultimately satisfy those you are trying to appease, please do not do this to us.

Yours in Christ,

Eugenia A. Gamble

Eugenia Gamble, Pastor
Nipomo Presbyterian Church

1235 N. Thompson Rd. • P.O. Box 158 • Nipomo, CA 93444

PROTEST

I, Rev. Luanne Griguoli, a member of or commissioner to the Santa Barbara Presbytery wish to protest that churches were not allowed to make any motions before this meeting so they could be sent out in the docket re the Union proposal which then forced a church to do so 15 minutes after the meeting started which is not good process to say the least. They were forced to participate in poor process from Council so they appeared to be railroading something in the face of this Union Railroad from Council.

Date: May 5, 2012

RESPONSE

The Presbytery Council would like to acknowledge receipt of the protest filed by Rev. Luanne Griguoli at the May 5, 2012 presbytery meeting at First Presbyterian Church, San Luis Obispo. This protest will be entered into the minutes of the meeting, along with our response, as follows:

Commissioners are allowed to present items of new business in accordance with the Standing Rules of the Presbytery of Santa Barbara, specifically

> **2.28 NEW/RECONSIDERED BUSINESS** The intent to introduce an item of new business or to reconsider a previous presbytery action at a stated meeting of the presbytery shall be made in writing to the stated clerk within one hour after the meeting has been called to order. The moderator shall announce at the next appropriate interval the item to be considered.

In addition, any church session and any presbyter may, at any time prior to a presbytery meeting, advise the presbytery office of their intent to introduce an item of new business and the presbytery office will make every effort to distribute that item of new business to all church sessions and presbyters. There has never been, nor will there ever be, an attempt to prevent motions coming before the presbytery as a whole. The implementation of Standing Rule 2.28 was designed to prevent new business coming onto the floor of presbytery towards the end of the meeting after many presbyters might have already left.

Items of new business so introduced may be referred to the appropriate committee or to Presbytery Council, if deemed appropriate by the Moderator or the Stated Clerk, or may be taken up by the presbytery as a whole.

If any communication from Presbytery Council or the presbytery office prior to the May 5, 2012 presbytery meeting indicated or implied that "there will be no motions at this meeting," that statement was meant to assure the presbytery that we would not vote on the Union proposal itself; it was not intended to prevent motions coming to the floor of presbytery from a presbyter or church session. Presbytery Council and presbytery staff apologize if this intent was not made clear.

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Elected at the May 5, 2012 presbytery meeting in *bold italics*

OFFICERS OF THE PRESBYTERY

Rev. Jeff Bridgeman	***Moderator*** (term as Moderator June 30, 2012- June 30, 2013)
_____	Moderator-elect (term as Moderator June 30, 2013- June 30, 2014)
Elder Michelle Holmes	Stated Clerk (term ends 2014)

PRESBYTERY COUNCIL

Jeff Bridgeman	Moderator	Mike Wesner	Chair Property and Finance
Bev Ford	for Presbyterian Women	_____	Moderator-elect
Larry Lindsay	***Member at Large '15***	_____	Chair Nominations
Rev Janet Loughry*	Past Moderator	_____	Chair Church in the World
Frank Matthews	Member-at-Large '14	_____	Chair Preparation for Ministry
Rev Kent Meads	Chair Church Development	_____	Chair Committee on Ministry
David Ross	Chair Personnel	_____	Treasurer
Rev Alan Stones	Member at Large '13		

*Past Moderator is chair of Council

COMMITTEES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Church Development Committee (9 members)

Rev Dan Birchfield	'13	Port Hueneme
Diane Kirkpatrick	'13	SB First
Rev Kent Meads, Chair	'13	Ventura Community
Rev Tom Stephen	'14	Newbury Park
Frank Matthews	'14	Orcutt
_____	'14	(vacant)
Rev Israel Gonzales	***'15***	***Orcutt***
_____	'15	(vacant)
_____	'15	(vacant)

Committee on Preparation for Ministry
(8 members – 4 ministers and 4 elders)

Rev David Berge	'13	Ojai
Rev Alan Stones	'13	Retired
Elder Norma Zuber	'14	Ventura Community
Elder Robert Farrow	'14	Ventura Eastminster
Elder Jim McClurkin	'14	Ventura Community
Rev Bob Ohman	'14	Retired
Elder _____	'15	(vacant)
Rev _____	'15	(vacant)

Clergy Support Committee (3 members)

Rev Jeff Bridgeman	'13	SB El Montecito
Rev Janet Loughry	'14	Moorpark
_____	'15	(vacant)

Church in the World Committee (9 members)

Dolores Taylor	'13	Ventura Eastminster
_____	'13	(vacant)
_____	'13	(vacant)
Rev. Art Beals	'14	Honorably Retired
Joyce Maxwell	'14	Thousand Oaks
_____	'14	(vacant)
_____	'15	(vacant)
Mary Fisher	***'15***	***Orcutt***
_____	'15	(vacant)

Committee on Presbytery Enrichment/COPE
(6 members; vacancies are filled by Council Chair)
Rev Jeff Bridgeman – Moderator
Rev Janet Loughry – Past Moderator
_____ – Moderator-elect
Elder Larry Lindsay – At-large
Rev Tom Stephen – At Large
Bonnie Boe – At Large

Appropriate Response Task Force (9 members)
Rev David Berge
Elder Doug DuCharme
Elder Joan Johnson
Elder Larry Lindsay
Elder Ruric Nye
Elder Leslie Ooms
Rev Alan Stones

Committee on Ministry
(14 members – 7 ministers and 7 elders)

Rev Stuart Bond	'13	Thousand Oaks
Rev Bruce Lethbridge	'13	Orcutt
Elder Nan Allen	'13	Cambria
Elder Carol Ohman	'13	SB El Montecito
Elder Meg Linhardt	'13	Solvang
Rev Warren Einolander	'14	Los Alamos
Rev Dale Paulsen	'14	Morro Bay
Elder Larry Lindsay	'14	Newbury Park
Elder Ruric Nye	'14	Ojai
Elder Jim Gravitt	'14	Los Alamos
Rev Jarrett Johnson	***'15***	***Carpinteria***
Elder Mickey Stueck	***'15***	***Moorpark***
Rev Brett Becker	***'15***	***SB St. Andrew's***
Rev Jessica Vaughn Lower	***'15***	***At Large***

Permanent Judicial Commission (9 members)

Rev Jeff Bridgeman	'14	Santa Ynez Valley
Elder Lynne Farrow	'14	Vta Eastminster
Rev Wayne Kempton	'14	Vta Community
Rev Dana Shaw	'16	Thousand Oaks
Elder Sandy Thoits	'16	SB St. Andrew's
Elder Garry Grant	'16	Orcutt
Rev Dan Birchfield	***'18***	***Port Hueneme***
Elder Lee Kirkpatrick	***'18***	***SB First***
_____	'18	(vacant)

Nominations Committee (6 members)
1/3 each ministers, lay men, lay women
(nominations are made by Council)

Mickey Stueck	'13	Moorpark
Garry Grant	***'13***	***Orcutt***
Frank Matthews	'14	Orcutt
Rachel Tobler	'14	SB St. Andrew's
Rev _____	'15	(vacant)
Rev _____	'15	(vacant)

Personnel Committee (6 members)

Leslie Ooms	'13	Santa Ynez
Rev Andrew Rock	'13	Grover Beach
David Ross, Chair	'14	Thousand Oaks
Rev Jay Shirley	'14	SB El Montecito
Kathy Devlin	***'15***	***Pt Hueneme***
_____	'15	(vacant)

Property and Finance Committee
(9 members, one must be a minister)

Dave Baumgartner	'13	Oxnard
Rev Charlie Little	'13	Templeton
Garry Grant	***'13***	***Orcutt***
Bill Anders	'14	Orcutt
Steve Martin	'14	Goleta
Mike Wesner, Chair	'14	Moorpark
_____	'15	(vacant)
_____	'15	(vacant)
_____	'15	(vacant)

Overture Reaffirming Marriage from the Presbytery of Santa Barbara

The Presbytery of Santa Barbara overtures the 220th General Assembly as follows:

Whereas there are voices within the PC(USA) which advocate deleting our constitutional description of marriage as between "a woman and a man," (W-4.9001) and replacing it with an ambiguous phrase defining marriage as between "two persons;" and,

Whereas those who advocate for a "two persons" definition also appeal to the General Assembly to allow pastors and churches to conduct same-gender marriages; and,

Whereas our Book of Order refers nine times to marriage as between a man and a woman, or a husband and a wife, W-4.9001 (three times), W-4.9002a, W-4.9004 (twice), W-4.9006 (twice) and D-14.0202; and,

Whereas PC(USA) ordination and installation questions require that officers fulfill their ministry "in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture" (W-4.4003 d.); and,

Whereas our Lord Jesus Christ challenged all cultural erosions of marriage by reaffirming the orders of creation, to the end that only a man and a woman are to be united as one in marriage (Matthew 19:4-6); and,

Whereas though the Lord Jesus Christ and the New Testament do permit divorce in exceptional circumstances (e.g. adultery in Matthew 19:9 and desertion I Corinthians 7:15), and although our Book of Order permits marriage after divorce (W-4.9002.7), there are no New Testament doctrinal exceptions to the created order of marriage as a union of one man and one woman; and,

Whereas there are no Old Testament and no New Testament doctrinal exceptions to the consistent and univocal scriptural prohibitions of sexual unions between persons of the same gender (e.g. Romans 1:18-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 and their Old Testament background scriptures Genesis 19:4-7, Leviticus 18:22, Leviticus 20:13, Judges 19:22-24, and the many "Sodom" warnings and allusions in both testaments); and,

Whereas the PC(USA) questions for officer ordination require us to "be instructed and led" by our Confessions, and "continually guided by our confessions." (W-4.003 c, d.); and,

Whereas Part I of the PC(USA) Constitution, the Book of Confessions, affirms fidelity in marriage between a man and a woman and chastity in singleness, in thirty varied, yet univocal passages (4.108-109/; 5.245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251/; 6.131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139/; 7. 070, 071, 072, 080/; 7.130, 247, 248, 249, 256, 2.58; 261/; 9.47); and,

Whereas there are no passages in the PC(USA) Book of Confessions or Book of Order which permit any sexual union outside of the marriage between a man and a woman; and,

Whereas the gospel of Jesus Christ points to redemption by Christ for those who confess and repent of all transgressions against His Word, illustrated by 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 "...that is what some of you were, but you were washed...sanctified ...justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God,"

Therefore, we overture the General Assembly to declare that the orders of creation, the safeguards, warnings, judgments and provisions of scripture regarding sexuality are all part of the loving, redemptive purposes of God in Jesus Christ, and that consequently sexual liaisons outside of faithful marriage between a man and a woman, or chastity in singleness, are contrary to the divine redemptive purposes.

The Salary Report is not included on the presbytery's website.

If you have questions, please contact the Presbytery Office.