

PIN 2 STAGE PROCESS FOR CONGREGATIONS

1st STAGE: DISCERNMENT

- Discernment stage begins when the session decides to explore the relationship of the congregation with the PC(USA)
- The primary goal is to listen to the leading of the Holy Spirit and answer the question, “What is God leading us to do in order to best fulfill our kingdom work?”
- The session is in the lead, the presbytery would like to be invited in.
- The COM liaison is involved in the discernment stage. Others may be invited in to be on a Discernment Team of congregational members and presbytery representatives.
- The PIN discernment resource is a tool—not a mandated process.
- Congregations have often taken 6-9 months to complete their discernment
- Studying Scripture as well as doctrinal statements is done during this stage.
- The discernment team or session seeks to listen to the Spirit and to the congregation through a variety of methods that give opportunity for all voices to have a space to talk and share their thoughts/concerns. These methods might take the form of town hall gathering, smaller group conversations, written responses to questionnaires distributed to everyone in the congregation, letters from congregations members to the discernment team and/or conversations with individual members of the congregation. Resolving the differences in theological opinions is not the goal—but discerning what to do in the midst of those differences (ie. you don’t have to all be of one mind regarding an issue).
- The Discernment Team or Session generally explores options and shares those options with the congregation.
 - Information regarding various Reformed denominations is studied
 - Information regarding affiliation groups within the PC(USA) like Fellowship of Christians is studied.
 - Information regarding the actual decisions/stands of the PC(USA) is studied.
- The Discernment Team or Session after listening to the Spirit and the congregation decides whether to seek dismissal from the PC(USA).
- The decision of the Discernment Team or session is shared with those who need to know (I.E. COM, Presbytery).

2ND STAGE: ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION

- If the decision is to seek dismissal the presbytery forms an Administrative Commission (AC) at one of its regularly scheduled quarterly meetings and determines what powers the AC has regarding the situation.
- The AC is in the lead and works with the session.
- The AC moderates a congregational meeting in which the congregation votes on being dismissed.
- The AC negotiates a dismissal plan with the Session.
- The negotiation includes financial implications. The AC must consider the financial value of the property which is held in trust for the PC(USA).
- The AC discusses with the Pastor their intentions regarding continuing membership in the PC(USA).
- If the AC has only been given the power to negotiate and not decide the dismissal plan, the presbytery must approve the plan at one of its regularly scheduled quarterly meetings.

ONLINE/PEOPLE RESOURCES

Presbytery COM liaison _____ for _____ church

Discernment:

1. Discernment Resource Available from the Presbytery Office and on the website www.presbyinw.org, Resources, COM Resources, Reconciliation Resources, Discernment Resource for Congregations in Conflict
2. PC (USA) resources www.pcusa.org
3. Comparison chart of PC(USA), ECO, and EPC
<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CB4QFjAA&url=https://www.pcusa.org/resource/pcusa-comparison-chart&ei=R9JCVYPPEpDnoATp3oDADw&usg=AFQjCNHb9rlzzyhrqntSVtcqvel01dFAig&bvm=bv.92189499,d.cGU>
4. Fellowship of Christians
<http://www.fellowship.community>
FPC, Spokane, Pastor John Sowers 509/747-1058
5. Video about changes regarding marriage:
<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CB4QFjAA&url=https://www.foga.pcusa.org/section/foga221-foga221-marriage&ei=vtNCVae7LcWzoQSU34D4CA&usg=AFQjCNFsNrvSiS6QE54PSLxDaJwk0HLM9A&bvm=bv.92189499,d.cGU>
6. Book of Order New Language:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the wellbeing of the entire human family. Marriage involves a unique commitment between two people, traditionally a man and a woman, to love and support each other for the rest of their lives. The sacrificial love that unites the couple sustains them as faithful and responsible members of the church and the wider community.

In civil law, marriage is a contract that recognizes the rights and obligations of the married couple in society. In the Reformed tradition, marriage is also a covenant in which God has an active part, and which the community of faith publicly witnesses and acknowledges.
7. Palestine/Israel Issues
Pastor Bill Ward, Reardan, WA 509/796-2141

Administrative Commission

- <http://presbyinw.org/download/gracious-dismissal-procedure-for-administrative-commission/>