

Prospect Hill Policy on Dismissing Congregations

Abbreviated Policy Overview

These are only excerpts of a larger policy that contains the actual steps and timeline for dismissal from the PC(USA)

1. Clerk of Session (COS) informs Presbytery Stated Clerk (PSC) of the intention to leave the PC(USA)
2. Commission on Ministry (COM) sends a representative to meet with the Session
3. Listening sessions are held with the congregation. Results of the listening sessions should be shared with the congregation and COM.
4. Session affirms its intention to leave the PC(USA) in the minutes of a meeting. Schedules the 1st congregational meeting to take the 1st vote to leave.
5. Clerk of Session informs Presbytery Stated Clerk of the confirmed intent to leave.
6. 1st congregational meeting is held to ask questions, make statements, hear from the Presbytery, and take a vote: “Shall [church name] continue to consider a request for dismissal from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)? Yes or No
7. Signed copy of the minutes of the congregational meeting will be sent to the PSC including results of the vote. 75% must be in favor. If not, the discernment by the particular church on considering a request to be dismissed from the PC(USA) is ended and the matter is closed.
8. If the 75% threshold is met, COM will conduct a Mission Assessment Study
9. No later than 6 weeks after materials have been gathered, the COM will present the session with a report that should be shared with the congregation no later than 2 weeks from the time of the session meeting. At this session meeting, a vote will be taken to continue the process and, if passed, a 2nd congregational meeting will be scheduled (no earlier than 3 months after the 1st). COS will inform the PSC.
10. 2nd congregational meeting is held to ask questions, make statements, hear from the Presbytery, and take a vote: “Shall [church name] continue to consider a request for dismissal from the PC(U.S.A.) to [Reformed body]? Yes or No

11. A signed copy of the minutes of the congregational meeting will be sent to the PSC including results of the vote. 75% must be in favor. If not, the discernment by the particular church on considering a request to be dismissed from the PC(USA) is ended and the matter is closed.
12. If the 75% threshold is met, COM will conduct a Membership Assessment Report to determine if a sufficient number of members had input. That report shall be presented at the next Presbytery Council meeting where the Council will call for a special meeting of the Presbytery or add the Request for Dismissal to the docket of the next stated meeting.
13. At the next meeting of the Presbytery, a 2/3 approval for the motion to dismiss is required. If it is achieved, the Presbytery will appoint an Administrative Commission to negotiate a Plan of Dismissal which includes such things as ecclesial, legal, real estate, and membership items and timeline.
14. Plan of Dismissal is presented to the Session which must be approved by a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote.
15. Plan of Dismissal gets approval from the Administrative Commission which recommends it to the Presbytery Council.
16. The Council considers the Plan of Dismissal at its next meeting and votes to recommend it (or not) to the full Presbytery. Session members are welcome at this meeting. If approved, the Council will set a date for a meeting where the Presbytery will hold a 2nd and final vote on the dismissal according to the Plan of Dismissal.
17. At the Presbytery meeting, a 2/3 approval of the Plan of Dismissal is required. If 2/3 is not reached, the Administrative Commission and the Session will craft a new Plan of Dismissal that will be considered at the next Presbytery meeting. If 2/3 approval is attained, the Plan goes into effect and the congregation is dismissed.