



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on April 1, 2015

Nat'l Black Church Initiative Breaks With PCUSA Over Same-sex Marriage

The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI), a faith-based coalition of more than 34,000 churches comprising 15 denominations with nearly 16 million African-American members, [announced on March 27](#) that it no longer remains “in fellowship” with the Presbyterian Church (USA) following its vote last summer to approve same-sex marriage.

Rev. Anthony Evans, NBCI’s president, urged the PCUSA to repent of its sins and return to its former relationship with NBCI:



NBCE and its membership base are simply standing on the Word of God within the mind of Christ. We urge our brothers and sisters in the PCUSA to repent and be restored to fellowship.

PCUSA’s manipulation [of the Word of God] represents a universal sin against the entire church and its members. With this action, PCUSA can no longer base its teachings on 2,000 years of Christian scripture and tradition and call itself a Christian entity in the body of Christ.

It has forsaken its right by this single wrong act.

Many Presbyterians would argue that the PCUSA is guilty of a long series of “wrongful” acts that twist Scripture to make it relevant to the world, in the hopes that the church would attract new members to offset its decades-long decline. By trying to make the PCUSA “relevant,” it seems to be making itself irrelevant altogether.

In 1967, the PCUSA had 3.3 million members. In 2013, the membership was less than 1.8 million, a decline of nearly 50 percent. With the increase in the number of break-away denominations peopled by former members unhappy with the church’s rush after relevance in a declining world, the PCUSA continues to bleed members.

The most recent rush after relevance by the PCUSA began in 2010 when the denomination voted to abandon its expectation of monogamy in marriage and celibacy for its single ministers. In 2012 the church’s General Assembly came up just short of approving same-sex unions but remedied that supposed defect in June 2014 by voting 71-29 to redefine marriage as between “two people” rather than the scriptural command, between “a man and a woman.”

The outward flow has accelerated to a torrent, with the denomination losing 200,000 members in just the last two years.

That flow has been enhanced with a series of “wrong acts” in the eyes of its members, including its decision to divest itself of investments in its pension plans in companies such as Hewlett-Packard, Caterpillar, and Motorola, which are allegedly facilitating Israel’s “occupation” of its land in the Middle East. It overwhelmingly backed a campaign to pressure the State Department to remove Cuba from its list of state-sponsored terrorists. Its long-term membership in the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, which opposes any restrictions whatsoever on abortion, coupled with similar affiliations with



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the radical National and World Councils of Churches, have effectively driven Bible-believers to find other homes.

One of the early alternate homes for believers was the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), formed in 1973, which is now the second-largest Presbyterian denomination in the United States. The Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) left the PCUSA in 1981.

The largest break came in 2012 when it became clear that the juggernaut of relevancy over Scripture was impossible to stop. The Fellowship of Presbyterians held several national conferences for those disaffected, resulting in the founding of ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians, in 2012.

The decline of the PCUSA, along with other mainline denominations trying to stave off declining membership by trying to cater to the decline in general morality, is staggering, but far from unique. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has lost two-thirds of its membership since 1965, while the Reformed Church in America has lost 62 percent since 1967. The United Church of Christ (Congregationalist) has lost half its membership since 1965 along with the Episcopal Church.

On the other hand, those hewing to a more traditional view of Scripture as the inspired Word of God have experienced explosive growth. Since 1973 the PCA has grown by almost 800 percent, while the Church of God in Christ has seen an increase in its membership of 1,194 percent. The Evangelical Free Church in America has seen its membership grow by 749 percent since 1965, and the Assembly of God churches have grown by 430 percent over the same period. The Southern Baptist Convention, which in 1965 already had more than 10 million members, has seen its membership grow to nearly 16 million in 2013.

As Mark Tooley, writing in *The American Spectator*, incisively noted:

Essentially, the PCUSA ... has resolved to become even smaller, older, and whiter, creating a future that depends more and more on endowments instead of live people....

It represents the faded vestige of a once-distinguished religious body that indelibly shaped America.

Rest in peace, PCUSA, and thanks for the memories.

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