

# *Our Freedom of Religion at Risk: A Presbyterian Crisis*

Your Invitation to a Vital, Webinar Convocation

Thursday, February 19, 2009  
2:00-5:30 PM EST



[www.presbyterianconvocation.org](http://www.presbyterianconvocation.org)

Is evolving civil law eroding constitutional protection of religious freedom under the First Amendment? Is our historically rooted Presbyterian system of church governance at risk when courts interfere with Presbyteries exercising their ecclesiastical obligations under our *Book of Order*?

You are invited to explore these and related issues at a live and interactive on-line convocation. ***Our Freedom of Religion at Risk: A Presbyterian Crisis***, organized by Pittsburgh Presbytery on Thursday, February 19, 2009 from 2:00-5:30 PM, EST.

Presentation topics followed by on-line group discussions are:

- *The Westminster Assembly* by Dr. Joseph Small
- *Covenant and Freedom of Conscience* by Dr. Beau Weston and Dr. Euan Cameron
- *Religious Liberty: A Legal History* by attorneys the Rev. Mark Tammen, Esq. and the Rev. Jeff Tindall

Full details including a registration form and deadline, bulletin insert and speaker bios are available on the event website at [www.presbyterianconvocation.org](http://www.presbyterianconvocation.org)

Your participation in this convocation is important because the unity and independence of the church are at risk from within and without.

Ministers, sessions, trustees and congregations encouraging division within the church encourage subordination of the church to the state when they file civil lawsuits against presbyteries. Court orders sought to prevent presbyteries from dealing with division, disorder, disobedience dismissal and determination of the true church threaten the beliefs and religious practices of our denomination.

Evolving civil law in many jurisdictions appears intent on treating all denominations without episcopal hierarchies as congregational in their governance. This trend ignores the Biblical and historical nature of Presbyterian ecclesiastical practices. It weakens the constitutional barrier against government interference in religion.

Pittsburgh Presbytery recognizes that for too long Presbyterians have acquiesced to the appealing concept of “me” centered religion. We have not emphasized that Christ’s church is not the building where one worships or the congregation where one belongs. Rather, we are one church, universal, in covenant through Christ. The failure to encourage God-centered religious practice has left a void filled by notions that religious organization is no different from any non-religious, non-profit group fully subject to invasion by the state into its internal affairs.

This convocation will be conducted at Beulah United Presbyterian Church in the Pittsburgh suburb of Churchill, PA for local participation and simultaneously webcast live via the internet. Question and answer participation from internet sites is being planned. Because of production and webcast expense, there is a minimal cost for group participation. A cost schedule can be found on the registration form at [www.presbyterianconvocation.org](http://www.presbyterianconvocation.org) Pittsburgh Presbytery welcomes your attendance at the convocation in person or by group viewing and discussion throughout your presbytery.

For more information go to

[www.presbyterianconvocation.org](http://www.presbyterianconvocation.org)

Presbyterian Convocation Organized by  
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