

Our New Church Bible

From the Session, June 1, 2003

At its April meeting, the Session voted unanimously to adopt the English Standard Version as Tenth's primary translation for teaching and worship, effective September 2003.

Session recognizes that an essentially literal translation best matches Tenth's high view of Scripture and its commitment to expositional preaching. This reflects our confidence in the verbal (down to the very words in the original languages) and plenary (throughout every part) inspiration of Scripture. We believe the English Standard Version (ESV) best meets these goals.

When Tenth moved to the New International Version in the late 1970's, it was considered the most readable, scholarly version for corporate worship. Since then our senior pastors have often desired a text more faithful to the original languages. The ESV is an excellent, modern translation which is literally faithful to the original manuscripts and offers uncompromising readability.

This is a timely decision because Dr. Ryken will begin a new expositional series on the Gospel of Luke in September. At that time we hope to replace all of the church Bibles with the English Standard Version. To mark this change, the theme of Dr. Ryken's sermon on the first Sunday in September will be the Word of God. Our current church Bibles will be donated to the Liberty church plant and other ministries.

This transition impacts the entire covenant community at Tenth... especially the next generation. Because of our dedication to Scripture memorization among our children, we propose a gradual transition within our Bible School to the ESV text. Beginning in September, Scripture memorization for children of pre-school age through second grade will immediately move to the ESV. For older students, use of the ESV will be suggested, but not required. To this end, the Family Life Commission will provide Scripture Memory workbooks with the ESV verses printed out for our children.

Some members may have questions about the English Standard Version. A videotape of special addresses by Drs. Wayne Grudem and John Piper outlining the excellence of the ESV text in scholarship and for expositional preaching will be shown at the Growth & Maturity Commission meeting June 17 at 6:30 pm in Fellowship Hall. The whole church is invited. The video will also be shown on Sunday, June 22, at 5:00 pm in Fellowship Hall. Written materials introducing the ESV will be available soon. For those wishing a more thorough treatment of the scholarly issues, we recommend Dr. Leland Ryken's book, *The Word of God in English*, which can be purchased in our Bookstore.

It is a significant decision for a congregation to change its Scripture version, especially a church with the size and influence of Tenth. But the Session believes unanimously that the ESV is the best version for preaching, reading and memorization both now and for years to come.