

March 19, 2015

Dear Church Family,

Greetings in the name and love of our Lord Jesus.

This past Tuesday two significant events took place in the life of CPC and our denomination.

Tuesday evening the Session met with representatives from the Presbytery at our request to discuss the concerns and questions that you as a congregation and we as elders have related to decisions that recent General Assemblies; decisions which have brought into question such issues as the Authority of Scripture, whether or not Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation, and the possibility that future ordination standards might eventually include the requirement to support same-sex marriage.

That meeting was helpful in giving the session clarity on the next step that should be taken in compliance with the Presbytery's policy for churches with our concerns. As a result we have sent a letter to Presbytery asking them to appoint a delegation to enter into dialogue with the Session about our distress. We ask for your continued prayers as we seek to follow Christ during these challenging times and for our congregation.

As many of you are no doubt also aware, simultaneous to our meeting with Presbytery, the PC(USA) reached a moment of change which some celebrate and we mourn. The redefinition of marriage has now been approved by a majority of the presbyteries. Beginning in June, the Directory for Worship will permit the marriage of two people of the same gender. This change is both profound and expected.

By approving this change the PC(USA) is disregarding the clear teaching of Scripture, the wisdom of those who have lived and died for the faith before us, and the continuing consensus of the contemporary church around the world. To do this is both disobedient and unwise. We know this particular change was intended by its proponents to extend the grace and the good news of Jesus Christ, and to further the witness of his Kingdom. We believe it accomplishes neither. Our objection to the passage of this redefinition is no way anti-gay. Our concern is that the church is capitulating to the culture and, in so doing, is misrepresenting Scripture.

We reaffirm that the language of this amendment does not require participation in services of marriage with which we disagree. It remains up

to each Session and Pastor (a.k.a. Teaching Elder) to determine what is and is not faithful for themselves and for their congregation.

We continue to face great challenges to our witness as a denomination and, more importantly, to our personal faithfulness. It is not enough for us to simply be for or against something. We who believe this change in the definition of marriage does not extend the grace and good news of Jesus Christ, nor further the witness of the Kingdom must now ask: What would, and how can we accomplish this?

Many of our neighbors do not know the Savior. Will we find a way to build relationships with them and introduce them to Jesus without reinterpreting biblical teaching? We believe, by God's grace, we can. But we must be committed to listening carefully and without judgment to their questions and their needs, and to responding with sincerity and with humility as those who have experienced the forgiveness and persistent grace of Jesus.

Our culture is marked by increasing hopelessness and isolation, yet we who follow Jesus are being nurtured daily in the community of the Trinity. Can we find a way to extend this community without compromising its foundational teachings? We believe, by God's grace, we can. But we must be willing to go to the darkest and loneliest places with the compassion, conviction, and hope of the Good News we profess.

We encourage you to be engaged, be educated, and be in prayer as we seek the Lord's direction together for loving, faithful and healing ministry. For more information that we have provided related to denominational concerns please consult the white pages on the CPC website (under link "Resources" then "Denominational Matters"). Also please continue with us in praying through the Psalms which is also referenced on the CPC website.

For Christ and His Church,

Pastors Rob & Jesse and the Session