

October, 2011

To Our Members and Friends of LPC:

This past May we wrote to you concerning our grave concerns about our Presbyterian Church (USA) denomination (quoting from that letter): “wholesale removal of the biblical standards long accepted not only in our denomination but throughout the worldwide church”. You may also be aware that there is a “new form of government”, referred to as nFOG, the first section of our Book of Order. nFOG is designed to streamline the way sessions and congregations relate to and are governed by presbyteries, synods and the General Assembly of the PCUSA itself. The affect has been to eliminate a number of rules by which we operated and frankly gives us more latitude in self-governance. However, with self-governance comes more responsibility to make sure your operating procedures and processes are well thought out and documented. LPC is in good shape here, and hopes to use the new changes to help clarify our identity as a joy-filled, welcoming and faithful Presbyterian church.

Also in the May letter you were told that the elders “have unanimously agreed to undertake a prayerful study of the prophet Jeremiah for the next two months.” We have completed that study, discussed our impressions, feelings, and what we felt God was telling us through our prayers. One clear message was that just as in Jeremiah’s time, we face a sense of doom and discouragement. But also, as in Jeremiah’s time, God offers hope, and we know that through our savior Jesus, this hope (and his love and grace) are very much around us.

So, what are we to do? We can say with certainty that we are not going to bow to the diluted biblical standards. The Bible is clearly to be obeyed, not just used as a set of guidelines. We can say with certainty that we are not going to hide in a corner hoping this will all pass. Jesus did not and his message was clear on that. We can say with certainty that we have no plans to separate from PCUSA. Jesus did not “cut and run” from adversity, rather used it as a way to build discipleship. What we WILL do is align ourselves with others in the denomination who stand by biblical truth and obedience (and there are quite a large number to align with) and speak openly, but respectfully about those truths. We will hold true to the authority of scripture, that Jesus Christ is the only Lord of our lives and world, and that candidates for leadership (pastors, elders, deacons, staff) will be held to the high standard of the sanctity of fidelity in marriage and chastity in singleness ( marriage in its biblical definition of between one woman and one man).

How do we head down this path? Three things are happening right now. First, Pastor Bill and Elder Doug Jenkins have just returned from a gathering of those with whom we may align ourselves. This organization forming within PCUSA is called “The Fellowship of Presbyterians”.

The results of this meeting of 2,000 Presbyterians may hold great promise for congregations like ours. Bill and Doug will report back to session on what they saw and heard, and make their recommendations.

Secondly, a small group from Session has been formed to write a Statement of Faith for LPC. This will be the “what” that proclaims who we are and why, and will be the driver for all that we do. This is essential since because of the changes in PCUSA the faith boundaries that have guided us for so long are less clearly defined. You will be hearing more about this.

Finally, we have asked the Mission Committee to suggest ways that we might redirect *unrestricted* PCUSA mission giving to causes that more clearly reflect the theological convictions and ministry passions of LPC.

Please pray for us in our work that we pray will glorify God. Please pray for those in our denomination who have strayed from the path of biblical truth and that they would see God’s light and turn around.

For Your Session,

Dave Berkowitz

Norma Brown

Chris Casten

Tara Dampman

Joe Franz

Alex Jacoski

Doug Jenkins

Eva Jennings

Claire Johnson

Bob Taylor

Dick Stover

Bud Slye

Bill Teague, Moderator