



Parkwood Presbyterian Church

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June 25, 2019.

To the congregation of Parkwood Church:

The annual gathering of the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada was held in early June. In recent years, the subject of human sexuality has been discussed, and the Assembly received a report from former moderators of the Assembly offering four options to find a way forward. After voting on the options, the Assembly ultimately chose a fifth option.

The Assembly, in the majority, asserted as follows:

1. The Presbyterian Church in Canada holds two parallel definitions of marriage and recognizes that faithful, Holy Spirit filled, Christ centred, God honouring people can understand marriage as a covenant relationship between a man and a woman or as a covenant relationship between two adult persons.

That congregations, sessions, ruling and teaching elders be granted liberty of conscience and action on marriage.

2. That congregations and presbyteries may call and ordain as ministers and elect and ordain as ruling elders LGBTQI persons (married or single) with the provision that liberty of conscience and action regarding participation in ordinations, inductions and installations be granted to ministers and ruling elders.

This action of the General Assembly does NOT change the doctrine or practice of the church. Because these statements PROPOSE substantial changes in both the doctrine (teaching) of the church and its discipline and government, the proposals cannot be put into effect unless and until they are approved both by a majority of the presbyteries (regional governing bodies) and by the next General Assembly in June, 2020.

The session of Parkwood (which includes the elders and our pastor) has reviewed the actions of the General Assembly and is very concerned about the direction proposed. The session at its meeting this week resolved to inform the congregation that the session's position on marriage is that, according to the authority of Scripture, and as stated in the subordinate standards (The Westminster Confession of Faith and Living Faith) marriage is designed by God as a union of one man and one woman.

We encourage the congregation to join with the session in praying that the presbyteries of the church will have discernment in the year ahead. You are encouraged to share any concerns about these matters with your elder, or with our representative elder to the local presbytery (Gord Walford) or with our pastor. The session will keep the congregation informed about any developments going forward.

Jesus said, "I will build my church." We remain confident that God is sovereign and will sustain Christ's church. We are called to proclaim the good news that Jesus came to save and reclaim and restore sinful men and women to live in the grace and mercy of God's love found in Jesus Christ. He calls and enables us to live in righteousness and holiness according to His word, in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit working in us. May God help us as part of Christ's Church to honour Jesus Christ.

In Christ's service,

James T. Hurd, Pastor.