



Pastor Randy Booth
Moderator of Council
Pastor Gregg Strawbridge
Moderator: Augustine Presbytery
Pastor Douglas Wilson
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Confederation of Reformed Evangelical Churches
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April 14, 2006

Dear men,

As some of you might already be aware, Saint Peter Presbyterian Church [SPPC] of Bristol, TN has recently faced several difficulties. Due to the fact that the exact membership vows, as required in the RPCGA Book of church Order, were not properly administered, the moderator (by authority of the Presbytery) of the RPCGA nullified the membership of all the congregation of SPPC, leaving them without any denominational affiliation. Moreover, the four members of the session were deposed from their offices and credentials by the moderator after a unanimous vote of Westminster Presbytery and were then moved to the general membership of the Westminster Presbytery / RPCGA. Subsequently, these four men were released from the general membership of the RPCGA without personal censure by erasure. The following statement was posted on the Confederation of Reformed Evangelical Churches [CREC] web site:

On Saturday, March 4, 2006, the congregation of St. Peter, Bristol, TN, voted to request that a Commission of five pastors or elders, from separate CREC congregations, be constituted to provide pastoral guidance for the immediate needs of the St. Peter congregation. This Commission is not judicial in nature, but rather pastoral. The CREC respects the judicial bounds of the RPCGA and intends to operate within those boundaries. The RPCGA has deposed the former session of St. Peter from office and has also released both the St. Peter congregation and her former session from RPCGA membership without censure. The RPCGA is aware that St. Peter has approached the CREC for pastoral counsel and care.

The RPCGA has not precluded the possibility that some or all of the St. Peter session might be reinstated to office in the future, provided they go through the normal credentialing process. That is not to say that reinstatement is a forgone conclusion, only that the judgment of the RPCGA does not necessarily call for their permanent exclusion from office. Ultimately, these decisions will be made by the congregation of St. Peter and any ecclesiastical body to which they might join themselves.

Our five-member-commission¹ examined many documents, received many emails and phone calls. We also traveled to Bristol, TN to meet with the various members of SPPC, including the former session members. Through this process the Commission has focused on pastoral issues as we dealt with a variety of concerns and opinions. We have been limited in the time we have had to reach our conclusions, yet the needs of this congregation have driven us to work within these constraints.

We are Asking for Your Assistance

The CREC does not think we have anything to gain by assisting SPPC, except as it would please the Lord for us to come to the aid of our fellow Christians. Given the climate of the Internet rumor mill, as well as other unsettling factors, it is our desire to seek the help of other respected Reformed brothers who are outside of our denomination, and who might help bring a godly and peaceful resolution to the congregation of SPPC. We are not asking you to reinvestigate the SPPC situation, nor even to concur with all of our counsel; we are asking you to support the pastoral efforts of the CREC Pastoral Commission by signing your name to the following statement:

¹ CREC Pastoral Commission members: Elder Patch Blakey, Pastor Randy Booth [chairman], Pastor Virgil Hurt, Pastor Gene Liechty, and Pastor Dennis Tuuri.

The men of the CREC Pastoral Commission, seeking to assist the Saint Peter Presbyterian Church [SPPC] of Bristol, TN, have labored in good faith in the service of a sister church. While honoring the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of other denominations, the CREC Pastoral Commission has provided appropriate, biblical direction and counsel to SPPC. Having read the CREC Commission Report to SPPC, I hereby offer my support for their report as an example of sound pastoral counsel and urge the broader Church to pray for SPPC as they seek to learn through their trials, pursue peace and unity, and honor the Lord Jesus Christ.

signature

date

Thank you for your willingness to assist us in this labor.

Your fellow servant,



Randy Booth
CREC Counsel Moderator
CREC Pastoral Commission Chairman