

# Prairie Lane Press

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## Forward as Family

Many of you know that the Council has been working through important issues pertaining to the women in office discussion. However, just as important as making a decision on the issue is healing from scars that remain from past debates. Reflecting back, several church members cringed at having another congregational debate on the topic. One person at the townhalls even went as far as to say, “we just need to vote and move on,” they were not in favor of a lengthy discussion on this again. No doubt there is fear of the emotional and social tension within our church family. So in fact, we are doing double duty. We are simultaneously searching for God’s vision for PLC while working towards restoring the bonds of a church family we love so dearly. As we continue to move forward it’s imperative that we begin by highlighting what unifies us as a family, that we celebrate what bonds us together before we discuss items we may disagree on.

As followers of Jesus Christ we are first and foremost united in His death and resurrection. Paul proclaims this in the book of Romans where he says, “For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship.” (8:14-5) Filled with the Spirit, we are family in Christ. Paul urges the church to consider itself the “body of Christ, and each of you is a part of it.” (I Cor 12:27) Paul goes on to articulate that the relationships within the church family symbolize the relationship believers have with God. In fact, the way we show patience, the way we release anger, the way we rejoice in truth, and hope for each other is the way we draw others into the Kingdom of God. As followers of the God who rescued us, we are now called to “make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.” (Ephesians 4:3-6)

While we are called to “bear with one another in love,” it is not unity at all costs. Our unity is bound not only by the living Word of Jesus Christ; but in the written Word which guides us. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, David

writes in Psalm 19 that the written Word “is perfect, reviving the soul...by them (His instructions) your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward.” Our Reformed tradition echoes this in the Belgic Confession by stating in Article 7 that “we believe that this Holy Scripture contains the will of God completely and that everything one must believe to be saved is sufficiently taught in it.” Indeed, Scripture is perfect and sufficient in revealing God’s will for us and PLC holds Scripture in the highest regard as it contains our Creator’s complete will and is perfect and complete in its revelation of God, humanity, and our relationship together. We are united in our desire to honor God by holding God’s Word as our highest authority and guide.

I do not think it is coincidental that Biblical passages surrounding church worship and leadership call for peace and unity within the body of believers. I’ve already mentioned Ephesians 4 where after the calling for unity Paul highlights the gifts of teaching, shepherding, and prophesying for the purposing of building up the body until it reaches that unity in the fullness of Christ. I’ve also previously mentioned I Corinthians 12 and 13 calling us to love. As I Corinthians 11 and 14 call for orderly worship, we as a family in Christ, One Body discuss these our issues with love and acknowledging in fact that in fact we need each other in spite of our differences. And finally, before discussing his instructions for worship in I Timothy 2, Paul urges everyone to live in peace and godliness.

More information from the council will be given when it is ready. In the meantime, Council again urges the PLC family to prayer. Let us pray in praise and celebration of the family at PLC that God has established. Pray, not to win debates, but that the Glory of God be shown and established through us. Pray the church, the family of God may remain a unified witness to a culture that celebrates division. Pray for the healing of torn relationships. Let us celebrate Word of God, both Living and written that binds us together for eternity and whose strength far surpasses the differences we may have today.

—From the Council

