

Presbyterians and Presbyterians Together: A Call to Charitable Theological Discourse

United in Mission

We are followers of Christ and heirs to Presbyterian and Reformed traditions, particularly as embodied in historic confessional standards. As such, we are committed to our Reformational heritage and believe it has an indispensable role in the mission of the Triune God, alongside and in cooperation with other churches, in our local communities, in North America, and throughout the world.

We embrace the highest view of Scripture's absolute authority and trustworthiness and a fidelity to the Reformed theology of our doctrinal standards. These commitments are in no tension with the church's missional calling to function, by Christ's Spirit, as an alternative society within our dominant cultures. These commitments do not undermine, but support the larger shape of that calling:

- worshipping our God who meets us in Christ through Word and Sacrament
- proclaiming his Gospel of grace to the ends of the earth
- serving others in deeds of love and mercy, embodying God's justice and peace
- engaging and countering our cultures with the renewing power of Christ
- nurturing healthy, growing, and reproducing churches
- developing gifts the Spirit has granted to men and women among God's people
- uniting with other Christians in mission as an expression of Reformed catholicity

In these areas God calls us in Christ, empowered by his Spirit, and guided by his Word, to proclaim and be a sign of the reign of God to the eyes of a watching world.

To remain faithful to this calling, we must not allow legitimate differences and diversity within our own tradition to become obstacles to witness or to obscure the Gospel's power in forming a new humanity around the person of Jesus Christ.

Together in Diversity

The Reformed tradition, particularly as expressed confessionally, represents a definite set of dogmatic contours, doctrinal boundaries, and exegetical trajectories. And that is a tradition we happily and warmly embrace as our own, in conformity with Holy Scripture.

Nevertheless, the Reformed tradition itself has evolved, and even in its formative years, always included differing perspectives on matters of theological detail. Moreover, our tradition typically allows those submitting to its fundamental system of doctrine nonetheless to dissent conscientiously from specific confessional expressions and propositions where such dissent is neither hostile to the system as a whole nor strikes at the vitals of religion, as determined by the judgment of our gathered presbyters.

There are numerous areas in which acceptable differences historically exist. Among others, these include:

- how we interpret the biblical doctrine of creation as to chronology, timing, and process
- how we characterize the pre-lapsarian covenant, particularly as to probation, grace, merit, and reward, and its relationship to and distinction from the covenant of grace
- the way we prioritize and integrate the tasks of biblical theology, historical-grammatical exegesis, apostolic typology, redemptive historical thinking, and study of ancient contexts

- the relative role we grant to specific experiences of conversion in relation to practices of Christian nurture and the ordinary means of grace within the covenant life of God's people
- how we best characterize the spiritual life of covenant children prior to their coming to a maturing faith through the ministry of the Word
- whether we regard sacraments truly to offer Christ and whether, when effectual, they confer grace instrumentally or are only occasions for the imparting or promise of grace
- how we interpret and enact biblical teaching on worthy participation in the Lord's Supper
- how we apply the regulative principle of worship practically to worship style and order, frequency of communion, the church year, and the like
- how we translate scriptural teaching on the Jewish Sabbath into a new covenant understanding of resting upon Christ and celebrating the Lord's Day
- how we construe and implement biblical principles of church polity in accordance with our respective church orders
- how the church rightly relates to the civil magistrate and wider culture while maintaining her proper spiritual identity and mission
- the way we apply Scriptural teaching on election to the lived experience of God's people as the church visible
- how we confess the return of our Lord and the final judgment in relation to the millennium and progress of the Gospel

Of these differences, some are more matters of doctrinal content, emphasis, or articulation, while others are more matters of pastoral application or expression of our doctrine.

Such diversity, we believe, is healthy and welcome as part of the ongoing life of God's people as we seek to grow up into unity of faith and live together in the peace of Christ. John Calvin himself writes,

For not all articles of true doctrine are of the same sort. Some are so necessary to know that they should be certain and unquestioned by all men as the proper principles of religion...Among the churches there are other articles of doctrine disputed which still do not break the unity of faith...Does this not sufficiently indicate that a difference of opinion over nonessential matters should in nowise be the basis of schism among Christians? (Institutes 4.1.12)

We lament our past failures to love our brothers and sisters as we ought, the ways we have broken the unity of faith over inessentials, and how we have countenanced foolish controversies, strife, and disputes within God's church.

In virtue of the church's mission, we purpose together to seek truth, all the while bearing patiently with and listening carefully to one another. We thereby seek to resolve our differences in the bonds of peace and unity, as is befitting those who confess the name of Jesus Christ, seek to live the Christian story, and work to advance his kingdom.

SÚLER D. ACOSTA
Associate Pastor
New Life Philadelphia PCA
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

VITO AIUTO
Organizing Pastor
Resurrection PCA
Brooklyn, New York

PAUL H. ALEXANDER
Pastor
Mission to the World, PCA
Ukraine Mission Pastoral Resource
Odessa, Ukraine

JOSHUA ANDERSON
Member
Trinity PCA
Charlottesville, Virginia
MDiv student
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

SEIMA AOYAGI
MDiv student, PCA
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

JOHN H. ARMSTRONG
President
Act3
Carol Stream, Illinois

JAMES LINCOLN ASHBY
Assistant Minister
Christ the King PCA
Houston, Texas

MICHAEL WILSON BARBER
MDiv student, PCA
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

WILLIAM S. BARKER
Professor of Church History Emeritus
Westminster Theological Seminary
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Adjunct Professor of Church History
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri
Attends
Old Orchard PCA
Webster Groves, Missouri

TUCK BARTHOLOMEW
Organizing Pastor
City Church PCA
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

ARTHUR BOULET
MDiv student, PCA
Westminster Theological Seminary
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

MATT BOULTER
Assistant Pastor
Christ the King PCA
Austin, Texas

LAWRENCE E. BRAY
Deacon
Reformed PCA of Boothwyn
Boothwyn, Pennsylvania

MATTHEW BROWN
Organizing Pastor
Park Slope PCA
Brooklyn, New York

MATTHEW PAUL BUCCHERI
Assistant Pastor
Redeemer PCA
New York, NY

RAY CANNATA
Organizing Pastor
Redeemer PCA
New Orleans, Louisiana

DAVID CASSIDY
Pastor
Redeemer PCA
Austin, Texas

RANDY CRANE
Pastor
West Friesland PCA
Ackley, Iowa

GARRETT CRAW
MDiv student
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

JOHN CUNNINGHAM
Ruling Elder
Church Counselor
Trinity PCA
Charlottesville, Virginia

SCOTT CUNNINGHAM
Deacon
Redeemer PCA
Athens, Georgia

DAN DILLARD
Pastor
Grace Reformed OPC
Bend, Oregon

DOUGLAS B. DOLL
MDiv student
Visiting Instructor of Greek
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

JUSTIN DOMBROWSKI
MA student
Ancient Judaism
Member
Emmanuel PCA
New York, New York

JOSHUA AARON EBY
Assistant Pastor
Redeemer Church PCA
Knoxville, Tennessee

GEORGE EDEMA
MDiv student, PCA
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

PETER ENNS
Professor of Old Testament and
Biblical Hermeneutics
Westminster Theological Seminary
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

MICHAEL A. FARLEY
PhD student
Historical Theology
Saint Louis University
Music Director
Crossroads PCA
St. Louis, Missouri

MICHAELA M FORBES
MATS Student
Covenant Theological Seminary
Youth and Community Worker
Edinburgh, Scotland

JOHN FRAME
Professor
Systematic Theology and Philosophy
Reformed Theological Seminary
Orlando, Florida

DIANA S. FRAZIER
Member, PCA
Chapter president
Women in the Church
Signatory, The Cambridge Declaration

JAMISON GALT
MDiv student
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

S. JOEL GARVER
Assistant Professor of Philosophy
La Salle University
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

KEITH GHORMLEY
Associate Pastor
Zion PCA
Lincoln, Nebraska

SHANE F. GIBSON
MDiv student, PCA
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

DOUGLAS J. GREEN
Professor of Old Testament and
Biblical Theology
Westminster Theological Seminary
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

TROY GREENE
MDiv, Beeson Divinity School
Member
Park Cities PCA
Dallas, Texas

MATTHEW T. GRIMSLEY
Chief Musician & Assistant Pastor
Redeemer Church PCA
Knoxville, Tennessee

DAVID HAGOPIAN
Teaching Elder
Ancient Hope CREC
Mission Viejo, California

JOHN K. HARALSON, JR.
Pastor
Grace Church Seattle, PCA
Seattle, Washington

KEN HARRIS
Visiting Instructor in Old Testament
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

TODD R. HARRIS
Headmaster
Covenant Classical School
Fort Worth, Texas

BARB HARVEY
Member
Covenant OPC
Dayton, Ohio

J. NELSON JENNINGS
Teaching Elder, PCA
Associate Professor of World Mission
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

GREG JOHNSON
Associate Pastor
Memorial PCA
St. Louis, Missouri

RUSSELL S. JUNG
MDiv Student
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

MICHAEL KELLY
Assistant Professor of Old Testament
Westminster Theological Seminary
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

EWAN P KENNEDY
Pastor
Westminster PCA
Elgin, Illinois

REGGIE M. KIDD
Professor of New Testament
Reformed Theological Seminary
Orlando, Florida
Pastor of Worship
Orangewood PCA
Maitland, Florida

WAYNE LARSON
Pastor
Redeemer PCA
Des Moines, Iowa

TIMOTHY R. LECROY
MDiv 2006, PCA
Covenant Theological Seminary
PhD student
Saint Louis University
St. Louis, Missouri

THOMAS LEE
Pastor
Cornerstone PCA
St. Louis, Missouri

PETER J. LEITHART
Teaching Elder, PCA
Senior Fellow
New St Andrews College
Pastor
Trinity Reformed Church
Moscow, Idaho

STEPHEN K. LEUNG
Ruling Elder
Chinese Christian Church of Virginia PCA
Student
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

SAMUEL T. LOGAN
Executive Director
World Reformed Fellowship
Chancellor and
Professor of Church History
Westminster Theological Seminary
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

TREMPER LONGMAN III
Robert H. Gundry Professor of
Biblical Studies
Westmont College
Santa Barbara, California

GLENN LUCKE
PhD student
Sociology
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, Virginia

KURT LUTJENS
Pastor
Grace & Peace Fellowship PCA
St. Louis, Missouri

STEPHEN R. MASTER
Assistant Professor
Pathology and Laboratory Medicine
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA

DANIEL MCKINNEY
Assistant Pastor
Jordan PCA
West Jordan, Utah

JEFFREY J. MEYERS
Pastor
Providence Reformed PCA
St. Louis, Missouri

J. DAWSON MILLER
MDiv student, PCA
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

MELISSA PARTAIN MOORE
Treatment Foster Care Case Worker
Delta Community Supports, Inc.
Member
Trinity OPC
Hatboro, Pennsylvania

SAM MURRELL
Pastor
Forest Park PCA
Baltimore, Maryland

A. RANDY NABORS
Pastor
New City Fellowship PCA
Chattanooga, Tennessee

CYNTHIA R. NIELSEN
PhD student
University of Dallas
MAR
Westminster Theological Seminary
Member
Park Cities PCA
Dallas, Texas

DAVID BRUCE NOBLE
MDiv student, PCA
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

LEON PANNKUK
Regional Director
Evangelism Explosion
St. Louis, Missouri

PATRICK R. PARK
MDiv student, PCA
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

MICHAEL N. PARKER
Associate Pastor
New City Fellowship PCA
St. Louis, Missouri

RONALD W. SCATES
Senior Pastor
Highland Park PCUSA
Dallas, Texas

MATTHEW SEILBACK
MDiv student, PCA
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

JEREMY SEXTON
MDiv student, PCA
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

LAURENCE C. SIBLEY, JR.
Minister, OPC
Lecturer in Practical Theology
Westminster Theological Seminary
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Visiting Professor
Baltic Reformed Theological Seminary
Riga, Latvia

CHRISTOPHER T. SMITH
Associate Pastor
Providence Reformed PCA
St. Louis, Missouri

BRIAN STEADMAN
MDiv student, PCA
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

GEORGE STULAC
Pastor
Memorial PCA
St. Louis, Missouri

GREG THOMPSON
Pastor
Trinity PCA
Charlottesville, Virginia

TRAVIS TAMERIUS
Pastor
Christ the King PCA
Columbia, Missouri

STEPHEN S. TAYLOR
Associate Professor of New Testament
Westminster Theological Seminary
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

RUSS THEISENS
Director of Student Ministries
Faith PCA
Cincinnati, Ohio

RYAN TOMPKINS
Pastor
Trinity Harbor PCA
Rockwall, Texas

JOSEPH TONG
President and
Professor of Systematic Theology and
Philosophical Theology
International Theological Seminary
Los Angeles, California

MARK TRAPHAGEN
MDiv student
Westminster Theological Seminary
Member
liberti PCA
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

MICHAEL VENDSEL
MAR student, PCA
Westminster Theological Seminary
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

BRANDON G. WITHROW
PhD Candidate, PCA
Westminster Theological Seminary
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

SAM WHEATLEY
Pastor
New Song PCA
Salt Lake City, Utah

MICHAEL D. WILLIAMS
Teaching Elder, PCA
Professor of Systematic Theology
Covenant Theological Seminary
St. Louis, Missouri

BRADLEY G. WRIGHT
Associate Pastor
Grace Woodlands PCA
Grace Woodlands, Texas