Northminster Presbyterian Church

May 13, 2011

Dear Northminster Church,

Northminster Presbyterian is a member of the Presbyterian Church (USA) denomination. Our denomination, like most denominations, has been struggling with the issues of human sexuality and homosexuality for over thirty years. During those years the official position of the denomination is one we supported. That changed this week when a majority of the presbyteries approved an overture to remove our existing sexuality standards for ordaining pastors, elders and deacons. Our denomination no longer requires ordained church leaders "to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and woman, or chastity in singleness." Under the new provision, candidates for ordination will now be examined on the basis of the "candidate's calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of office." Language about sexuality has been intentionally removed to allow churches and presbyteries to ordain people who willfully engage in homosexual or heterosexual sexual activity outside the bonds of marriage between a man and woman.

This is a very troubling development and one that Northminster Presbyterian does NOT endorse. Our standards for church officers will remain unchanged. Northminster will not knowingly ordain people engaging in sexual activity outside the bonds of marriage between a man and woman. The change that took place this week does not alter our position on this issue. Nor will the change be forced upon us in any way.

However, this is also troubling because we view it as a departure from the beliefs and practices of the church. The Session of Northminster Presbyterian is committed to holding fast to the clear teaching of Scripture on sexuality and leadership. We know we are all sinners standing in need of grace, but we also recognize the need to remain faithful. The Session has been monitoring and discussing denomination issues for some time. We are in the process of discerning how we can remain Biblically faithful in the PC(USA) denomination. The Session will be attending a gathering with other like-minded Presbyterians in Minneapolis this summer. There we will explore many options and look for a new way forward.

As a Session we ask you to pray for us and with us in the months ahead. Pray for your leaders and a new path that will allow Northminster to become the church of God's dream. If you have questions, or would like to see the exact wording of the change in provisions please contact the church office.

In Christ,

The Session:

Terri Arnett	Nora Johnson	Chuck Sahm	Doug Hucke
Linda Cory	Chad Kleine	Jeff Sorenson	Mike Shirey
Dave Edwards	Diane Newswander	Ric Stuck	Joel Vander Wal

10720 N. Knoxville Avenue
Peoria, IL 61615
309-691-6322
309-691-6031 Fax
www.northminster.us