

A Statement from the Session of First Presbyterian Church of Plymouth Michigan (FPCP) in response to the passage of Amendment 14-F, a change in the wording of paragraph W- 4.9000 of the Directory for Worship

First of all, the Session of First Presbyterian Church of Plymouth is committed to our oneness in Jesus Christ. We seek a unity in love and faith at First Presbyterian Church and will work to avoid division in our Church. The unity of the Church is a gift of the Lord. We acknowledge that there is “one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all” (Ephesians 4:5-6). Just as we affirm the unity of the Body of Christ, we also lift up the diversity of the Body’s members and members’ opinions. We seek to live in unity amidst diversity and we encourage healthy dialogue and debate that builds up the body of the church.

Second, we are committed to remaining within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). While not all of us agree with the decisions emerging from the General Assembly, we see no need to abandon the historic principles of the PCUSA regarding mutual forbearance with respect to issues regarding which people of good character and principle may disagree.

Third, we affirm that the Session cannot compel the Pastor to officiate any marriage ceremony nor can the Pastor compel the Session to allow the use of the building for any marriage ceremony. Both the Pastor and the Session have the freedom of conscience in their areas of governance in these matters. The existing FPCP policy requiring the approval by the Senior Minister of all marriages performed at FPCP remains in effect.

Fourth, we are committed to faithful discernment going forward. We have made no concrete decisions or any blanket statements concerning the issue of same sex marriage, nor have we set any deadlines to do so. We will seek and faithfully consider the input of our congregation in any decision the Session makes.

Finally, we believe in the sovereign work of God—and that God is working through even our toughest challenges and debates. We know that many people from outside of the church are watching how we debate and resolve this issue. So even in our conversations, we want to continue to be a witness to the grace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ and the redemption we have through him. We continue to look for where God is in all of this and we truly believe our faith in Jesus Christ will sustain us moving forward.

Adopted September 3, 2015