

The Session of Newton Presbyterian Church's Response to Amendment 10-A:

Whereas on May 10, 2011, a majority of the presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church (USA) have now approved Amendment 10-A to the constitution of the denomination, and whereas this action removes fidelity and chastity as ordination standards of the church, we do hereby affirm the following:

That we disagree with and deeply regret this departure from what the Bible clearly teaches about God's good gift of sexuality, which is that within the Old Testament our Triune God created male and female in the image of God, and ordained marriage as a covenant between one man and one woman (Gen 2:24), and in the New Testament, Jesus Christ our Lord, God-among-us, reiterated that marriage is instituted by God between one man and one woman, "and the two shall become one flesh" (Mark 10:7-8; Matt 19:5; W-4.9001-2).

That the call to live as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ in obedience to him includes living either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman, or in chastity in singleness.

That the church's only true authority is the Lord who has given his Word to the church as the supremely trustworthy guide for faith and practice (G-1.0100; W-2.2001).

That Jesus Christ is the one true Lord and Savior: "*There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved*" (Acts 4:12 NRSV).

That humankind's highest purpose is to live for the glory and honor of the Triune God. Yet, because we are all sinners, and have each fallen short of the glory of God, we are each and all in need of redemption.

That we will continue to call people to repent and receive the grace of God given freely in Christ Jesus.

That we will serve and encourage the efforts of all Christians to live a holy life, even and especially if that calling involves suffering and self-denial, and to offer our lives as a living sacrifice to God (Rom 12:1).

That we shall continue to require officers of the church (deacons, elders and ministers of Word and Sacrament) to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity with the historic confessional standards of the church, and that we shall continue to require of officers faithfulness within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman, or chastity in singleness, and shall not ordain nor install persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin.

That we will organize our life as a congregation and our resources around our primary purpose as an agent of God's mission in the world.

That we rejoice that God continues to use his church as the primary agent of reconciliation in the work of gathering up all things into Christ Jesus. Now more than ever we are committed to live the six great ends of the church: the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind; the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the kingdom of Heaven to the world (G-1.0200). The future of our denomination's witness to a lost and hurting world depends on our fidelity to biblical standards of redemption, healing and justice.

In and for the love of Christ,

We, the Session of Newton Presbyterian Church approve, adopt, & affirm the above statement.

August 9, 2011