

A Statement By Presbyterian Churchmen United

The Executive Committee of Presbyterian Churchmen United and its Synod contact ministers salute the Ministers, Church Sessions, and Supporters throughout the Presbyterian Church in the United States, who with us are united in the Declaration of Commitment signed during 1969, and since that date.

We reaffirm our allegiance to the Lord Jesus in faithfulness to our ordination vows and the tenets of the Declaration of Commitment.

On this third day of March in the year of Our Lord 1972, we prayerfully call to mind our solemn commitment — “that, should the basic theology or polity of the church be altered or diluted, we shall be prepared to take such actions as may be necessary to fulfill the obligations imposed by our ordination vows to maintain our Presbyterian faith.” Since we took this vow events in church history have moved us steadily towards “the altering and diluting” of our Biblical, Presbyterian theology and polity. Specifically, the forces of radical ecumenism have moved our denomination toward a proposed union with the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, whose Confessional stance is far removed from the Confession under which we took our vows.

With deep sorrow we acknowledge that we have not been able to check the assaults against the Reformed faith and the integrity of the Scriptures. De facto church union is clearly evidenced: (1) union synods are now a fact with one a reality and another soon to be announced; (2) nine union Presbyteries have already formed; (3) in the advanced process of restructuring which will eventually germinate the grass-root votes and subject our constituency to top-staff control; (4) the joint actions of several Boards and Agencies with their corresponding organizations in the United Presbyterian Church in the USA, and (5) the study draft Plan of Union which repeatedly calls for a “new church.”

In the light of these facts, it cannot be denied that already we are far down the road toward union, and it would be foolish for us to fail to make preparation for an eventuality which is coming to pass already. We dedicate ourselves to an honest preparation for a Continuing Presbyterian Church faithful to Scripture and the Reformed faith. In such preparation we are not divisive or schismatic but unified in our purpose to remain faithful to our ordination vows, and to move forward for Christ in whatever channels he may provide.

We find in our brethren of the Presbyterian Evangelistic Fellowship, the Concerned Presbyterians, and the Board of the “Presbyterian Journal,” servants of Christ with whom we are of one purpose. As we join hands with them in a united stand for a Continuing Presbyterian Church true to the Reformed faith and Presbyterian polity, we pray that Christ, the great Head of the Church, may use us to re-establish in America a Church faithful to the Bible, the Reformed faith, and the great Commission of our Lord.

(for additional information write: Rev. Paul Settle, Executive Secretary, Presbyterian Churchmen United, 3436 Wellington Road, Montgomery, Alabama 36106.)

A Brief History of PCU

Presbyterian Churchmen United is the outgrowth of a conviction on the part of certain ministers and officers of the Presbyterian Church, US, that a challenge must be offered to the mounting attacks being made against the Church and the Christian faith.

These attacks are evidenced by the downgrading of the Bible, the substitution of humanism for theism; the substitution of universalism for the necessity of Christ in salvation; the secularization and corruption of worship; the substitution of situational for Bible ethics; a contempt for New Testament evangelism; the support of radical social activism; the glorification of civil disobedience; a surrender of the temples of God to extortioners by invitation; advocating that Marxism be heard from pulpits; the centralization of power and removal of authority belonging to local church officers.

Against such attacks, the constitution of the Church offers sanctuary and mission. It is to Christ and not to men that ordained officers of the Presbyterian Church, US take their holy vows of ordination.

Within the Church, attempts to circumvent or destroy the constitution take the form of efforts to alter, obliterate, or reorganize. Such efforts exist in plans to: (1) Merge with the United Presbyterian Church in the USA, a denomination which abandoned its former confessional position in 1967; (2) Unite with non-Reformed churches under the Consultation on Church Union, thus obliterating the constitution in a massive non-Presbyterian and barely Christian super-church organization; (3) Write a “contemporary” confession to replace the Westminster Confession of Faith.

Already, Section 18-6 of the Book of Church Order has been amended, thus increasing the centralization of power and enabling the General Assembly, through the restructuring of synods, to begin the process of changing presbytery boundaries. This action eventually will nullify conservative votes and make it easier for liberal leadership to attain its goals.

The constitution is indeed under attack! Persuaded of this, a group of ministers met in Asheville, N. C., during the 1967 conference season. Many hours were given to prayer, testimony, and discussion.

The Rev. Donald Patterson, then pastor of the McIlwain Memorial Church, Pensacola (now pastor of the First Church, Jackson, Miss.) was chosen chairman of the informal group. Under his leadership prayer groups were organized in every presbytery as ministers of the Church sought God's guidance.

A larger group met in Asheville in August, 1968. In a deeply devotional atmosphere the group was named The Minister's Prayer Fellowship. Patterson was re-elected chairman, and was joined in the leadership circle by Dr. Carl McMurray of Marion, N. C. (co-chairman), Dr. Morton Smith of Jackson, Mississippi (secretary), and Dr. M. A. Macdonald of Clinton, S. C. (treasurer). These men were given the task of leading the group toward active efforts to meet the issues of the day.

Broadening the group to include representatives from several recognized organizations within the General Assembly, the chairman called a meeting in Atlanta shortly after Christmas, 1968. A Declaration of Commitment was drafted, refined, and presented through the mails to a sampling of Presbyterian, US ministers. Dr. John Richards, pastor of the First Church, Macon, Ga., was named Correspondent and began immediately to collect signatures of men who endorsed the Declaration. It was agreed that when the number of signers reached 500, the names would be published and the opportunity to sign extended to other ministers, church Sessions, Elders and Deacons. Copies of the document were mailed to over 1,100 ministers in the Presbyterian Church, US. By October 4, 1969, over 500 ministers had signed, 30 had refused, the remainder made no reply. Since publication of the 500 names many others have been added, including hundreds of Sessions and thousands of lay men and women.

In August, 1969, the Minister's Prayer Fellowship convened for its third annual meeting, again in Asheville. The group voted to combine its efforts with those developing from the Atlanta meetings and to form itself into an organization identified with the aims of the Declaration. An Executive Committee was elected, the Declaration of Commitment was formally adopted, and the officers were empowered to determine a name for the organization and prepare guidelines for its future ministry.

Many men have contributed to the progress thus far made. The whole effort can truly be described as a "grass roots" movement. The leaders and

original signers represent the widest variety of backgrounds and of personal interests.

Some persons who have joined Presbyterian Churchmen United are connected with other groups as well. Despite some differences, all are united in their convictions as expressed in the Declaration of Commitment. Signers believe that God has made them of one mind, and in this unity they support one another.

Today, PCU provides mature leadership for the earnest efforts of Bible-believing churchmen to bear testimony to Jesus Christ. In the face of serious defections from the Truth on the part of many denominational leaders, the organization has entered into cooperation with three other conservative groups in an attempt to insure the preservation of historic Presbyterianism in America. Believing that division apparently is inevitable, the four groups — Presbyterian Churchmen United, Concerned Presbyterians, the Presbyterian Evangelistic Fellowship, and the Presbyterian Journal Board — have appointed a Steering Committee for a Continuing Presbyterian Church, with the task of preparing for a church that is true to the Bible, the Reformed Faith, and that is obedient to the Great Commission.

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Closet Call

"And when thou prayest, enter into thy closet . . ."

—Matthew 6:6

On April 8, Paul Settle will appear as the "conservative spokesman in a Ouachita Presbytery-sponsored open forum which features representatives from each of the three viewpoints currently being expressed in the Church.

April 15-23, Ken Keyes, Paul Settle, James Baird, and Morton Smith will be appearing at public rallies throughout Louisiana and Alabama.

Pray much for God's blessings upon the Christian Education Conference, April 20-22, Montgomery, Ala.

Praise the Lord for continuing growth in the National Presbyterian and Reformed Fellowship, which brings together Bible-believing men from several denominations for sharing, prayer, and discussion.

Keep in your prayers the members of the Steering Committee for a Continuing Presbyterian Church.

And don't forget the P. E. F. evangelists (fifteen full time!) as they proclaim the Gospel across the land.

The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth."

—Psalm 145:18

ONE WAY to Biblical Education

A Conference for Reformed Christian Education

April 20, 21, 22, 1972

Trinity Presbyterian Church, Montgomery, Ala.

Featuring: Dr. Norman Harper, Renowned
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Rev. Pete Hammond, SE Director,
Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship

Rev. Paul Settle, Specialist in
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For Information: Write Rev. Ron Hieber, 1728 So.
Hull St., Montgomery, Alabama 36104

Co-Sponsored by Presbyterian Churchmen United
and Trinity Presbyterian Church

Planning and organizing . . .

The Memphis Information Meeting

How did we organize a meeting during which 450 people heard the Rev. Paul Settle and Mr. Jack Williamson speak on our church's affairs? Simply — much hard work by a number of interested Presbyterians — but it was a happy and rewarding task, for Christ's sake.

We organized a "Presbyterian Information Committee, composed of lay men and women from a number of different churches. About a dozen key men (and one indispensable lady!) met for two evenings to organize sub-committees and discuss all aspects of the effort. Duties were divided to cover these areas: (1) Compilation of a mailing list (from church directories and other sources); (2) Mailing; (3) Physical arrangements; (4) Ushering; (5) Finances; (6) Publicity; (7) Literature distribution; (8) Program (opening and benedictory prayers, a song leader, musicians, tape recording, etc.

A mid-Sunday afternoon time was decided upon as the best all-round time for attendance and for the convenience of our guest speakers. We were blessed to have access to the excellent 500-seat auditorium of the Memphis University School. Ample parking space was available and the territory was properly "neutral."

About three weeks before the meeting we: (1) Mailed preliminary letters to Concerned Presbyterians and other friends in Memphis, North Mississippi, and East Arkansas, asking for church directories; (2) Made personal phone calls to persons known to be concerned about the liberal trends in the Church; (3) Procured literature from PCU and Concerned Presbyterians for free distribution at the meeting; (4) Ordered 100 copies of Francis

Schaeffer's THE CHURCH BEFORE THE WATCHING WORLD to sell at \$1.00 per copy; and (5) Informed the newspapers of the upcoming meeting and sent current information to them periodically as the meeting date approached.

Our richest blessing in all these preparations was a group of dedicated and fired-up-for-the-Lord ladies. They were inspired and organized by one elect lady who labored mightily day and night. They spent countless hours on the telephone, stamped and sealed thousands of envelopes, and compiled invaluable records for future use.

We invited every minister in Memphis Presbytery to attend the meeting and were pleased that many of them attended, even though some were not entirely sympathetic with the Cause.

The final letter of invitation carried the names of the twenty members of the Presbyterian Information Committee, representing as many different Presbyterian churches in the Memphis area. All our publicity emphasized that the meeting's purpose was to provide high-level, factual discussion of the issues currently before the Church. Church officers have a duty to be informed. We were particularly pleased that so many "key" men from many different churches were present. We recommend personal letters and individual contacts in these efforts. We purposely avoided the use of the word "rally," since it often implies an immediate gathering of forces behind a common cause, and we recognized that many of those in attendance were not yet fully prepared to commit themselves to any cause.

With two such highly informed church statesmen to be with us, we recognized that we had newsworthy items far beyond mere reports of the meeting. A luncheon meeting was arranged for the guest speakers, the religion editor of the largest Memphis newspaper, and one of our committee members. We believe that the informal hour-and-a-half resulted in far greater understanding of our position. The result was a feature story on the following Saturday's religion page, plus a very good news account of the meeting itself.

WE were highly pleased that thirty-seven churches were represented by the more than 295 persons who completed brief questionnaire cards which were placed on each auditorium seat before the rally. These asked for Name, Address, Name of Church, and provided a place to check if more literature was desired. (All the pieces of literature offered free from tables in the foyer were taken, and all the Schaeffer books were sold.)

An offering was received which not only covered immediate expenses, but provided a surplus for future truth-spreading.

Since it was obvious from the excellent response to the Question-Answer period during the meeting, and from subsequent comments, that those present learned a great deal from Messrs. Settle and Williamson, we strongly urge that similar meetings be held as widely as possible across our General Assmbley.

Robert M. Metcalf
John O. Clark

Will it matter . . .

When All Is Said And Done

When all is said and done — when the trump, the shout, and the angel's voice reverberate through the skies . . .

Will it matter that someone was convinced that God is, and that He has spoken clearly in His written Word?

Will it matter that someone dared to measure his denomination's life and work by the unchanging Truth of the Bible?

Will it matter that someone wept when his beloved Church fell far short of the glory of God?

Will it matter that someone trusted God and tremblingly stood to champion the once-for-all Faith of the Gospel?

Will it matter that someone prayed for revival and pressed the claims of Christ upon His Church?

Will it matter that someone, when his pleading was ignored, prepared for a fellowship that preserved the Truth?

Will it matter, when Christ returns, that there was a Continuing Presbyterian Church that was loyal to the Scriptures, to the Reformed Faith, and obedient to the Great Commission?

When all is said and done, will it matter?

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CONTACT
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHMEN UNITED
3436 Wellington Rd., Montgomery, Ala. 36106

History

A full time Executive Secretary was hired in September, 1971, to assist in the task of preparing God's people for a Continuing Church. This executive, the Rev. Paul G. Settle, travels from headquarters in Montgomery, Ala., to every synod and presbytery to discuss and clarify the issues with groups large and small. Every member of the Presbyterian Churchmen United Executive Committee, and members of the Coalition's Steering Committee as well, give sacrificially of time and effort in sincere dedication to the Cause of Christ in a Continuing Church.

When the Presbyterian Church in the United States becomes something other than Presbyterian in government or Reformed in theology, Presbyterian Churchmen United, in cooperation with the Coalition, is prepared to rally God's people to a continuing Church that will proclaim and defend "the faith once for all delivered to the saints."

Synod's Contact Ministers

The following ministers provide dedicated leadership for Presbyterian Churchmen United on the Synod level:

- Alabama.....The Rev. James Baird, Gadsden
- Appalachia.....The Rev. Charles Turner, Chattanooga
- Arkansas-Oklahoma.....The Rev. Lardner Moore, Antlers, Okla.
- Florida.....The Rev. Adrian Munzell, Miami
- Georgia.....The Rev. Charles Dunahoo, Smyrna
- Kentucky.....The Rev. Eurie Hayes Smith, Cynthiana
- Louisiana.....The Rev. Michael Schneider, Alexandria
- Mississippi.....The Rev. Tom Patete, Winona
- Missouri.....The Rev. Vern Trueblood, St. Louis
- North Carolina.....The Rev. David White, Gastonia
- South Carolina.....The Rev. Harold Patteson, Columbia
- Tennessee.....The Rev. Fred Manning, Jr., Jackson
- Texas.....The Rev. Charles Galbraith, Corpus Christi
- Virginia.....The Rev. Kennedy Smartt, Hopewell
- West Virginia.....The Rev. Paul Bohn, Princeton

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