

# Hope Protestant Reformed Church

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Beloved Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

On Tuesday night many of us received an email inviting us to attend a lecture entitled, “Come out of Her, My People.” Based on the lecture title, the Scripture passage referenced (Rev. 18:4), and the speaker, one does not need to guess what this lecture will be about. The message of the lecture will undoubtedly be that Hope PRC, Redlands is part of Babylon and that you must come out of her or be destroyed.

This lecture, and the corresponding invitation to it, is a direct attack on this congregation. The speaker of this upcoming lecture is a justly deposed minister who is seeking to further the schism that he has caused throughout this year. Sadly, he now has the help of former members of this congregation in trying to lead more out of a true church of Jesus Christ. All of this is part of the devil’s work to tear apart the body of Jesus Christ.

As a consistory, we warn you against leaving a congregation in which the marks of a true church, set forth in Belgic Confession Article 29, are clearly visible. Certainly, as a congregation we are not sinless. Of ourselves, we are an unfaithful bride to our Savior, Jesus Christ. But our confidence is not in our own righteousness, but in our Savior Jesus Christ. As individuals, as officebearers, and as a congregation as a whole, we look to Christ’s saving work—both his perfect satisfaction and perfect obedience—trusting that on the basis of His saving work, all our sins are forgiven and we are righteous in Him. Furthermore, by the power of the Spirit of Christ, this church continues to manifest the marks of the true church. For any who are tempted to leave this congregation, we urge you to look at our church with an objective eye and see what an objective eye alone can see: pure preaching, proper administration of the sacraments, and faithful church discipline. And let us praise God for his faithfulness in graciously maintaining these marks among a sinful, undeserving people.

In addition, the consistory warns against leaving a church in which Christ is being faithfully proclaimed. Accusations have been made that Christ is not being preached here. As a consistory, we deem this charge to be without warrant, because as we sit under the preaching, we hear the voice of our Good Shepherd (John 10:16, 27). Again, we give our faithful God the praise for this also. Specifically, we praise our God for the fact that although the man standing behind the pulpit has changed over the years, the preaching—specifically, the fact that Christ is set forth in it—has not changed.

Congregation, you are not part of Babylon. You are not part of the whore that is the false church. You are a member of a true church of Jesus Christ. Christ’s word to you is not: “come out of her, my people.” Christ’s word to you is: “fear not, for I am with you.”

“We believe, since this holy congregation is an assembly of those who are saved, and out of it there is no salvation, that no person, of whatsoever state or condition he may be, ought to withdraw himself to live in a separate state from it; but that all men are in duty bound to join and unite themselves with it, maintaining the unity of the church.” Belgic Confession, Article 28.

The Consistory of Hope Protestant Reformed Church (Redlands)