

Minority Report

Committee on Pre-Advice – Rev. Langerak Case

Wednesday, April 21, 2021

At the regular Consistory meeting held on Thursday, April 15, 2021, the follow motion was passed:

Article 34 - A motion is made and supported to form a committee to recommend to the consistory on how to move forward with the reality that Rev. Langerak will not stop writing in the *Sword & Shield*. Motion carries. Committee: Steve Van Drunen, Kevin Brummel, Andy Birkett

History of this case:

At our February 11, 2021 meeting the following motion was passed:

Article 12 - Motion made and supported to require Rev. Langerak to resign as a contributing editor of the *Sword & Shield*, and discontinue writing for and promoting the publication. Motion made and supported to elide ground b and replace it with “For the sake of the effectiveness of the preaching in our congregation.” Motion to elide fails. Motion as originally moved carries.

Grounds:

- a. Rev. Langerak continues writing in and promoting the *Sword & Shield* as a co-editor with Andy Lanning, a deposed minister of the PRC who continues to live in the sin of schism.
- b. Rev. Langerak’s participation has caused, and continues to cause unrest and division in our congregation.

Upon the passing of this motion, it was considered by common consent to give Reverend a month to consider this.

At our March 11, 2021 meeting the following motion was passed:

Article 31 - A motion is made and supported to defer the requirement of Article 12 of our February 11 meeting pending the outcome of Mr. Andy Birkett’s protest. Motion carries.

Ground:

- a. Article 31 of our Church Order.

At our April 15, 2021 meeting the following motion was passed:

Article 33 - A motion is made and supported that we rescind Article 31 of our March 11 meeting. Motion carries.

Grounds:

- a. The original motion was not of continuing action, therefore, there was nothing to defer.
- b. The effect of the motion was not deferral but of reversal.

The Bible and Church Order must govern the Consistory as it considers the appropriate response to Rev. Langerak's refusal to abide by the ruling and decisions of the elders.

I am convicted that Rev. Langerak has God given freedom to write in *Sword & Shield*.

1. Article 84 of the Church Order which reads, "No Church shall in any way lord it over other Churches, no Minister over other Ministers, no Elder or Deacon over other Elders or Deacons."
2. The freedom, and the command to stand in the freedom, comes from his King, Christ Jesus. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1). When Crete's consistory tries to rob Rev. Langerak of that freedom, Rev. Langerak's response must be to not give "place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you" (Gal. 2:5).
3. This motion forces our minister to violate his conscience concerning the oath he took in the Form of Ordination of the Ministers of God's Word, to "and refuting with Holy Scriptures all schisms and heresies which are repugnant to the pure doctrine....Concerning the refutation of false doctrine, the same apostle said (Titus 1:9) "That a minister must hold fast the faithful word of God that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince the gainsayers".
4. When the elders see strife and division in the congregation of our Lord, I believe our calling is to root-out the cause of the disunity. Since unity is based upon the truth, it follows that disunity is found when the truth is being assaulted. Ephesians 4 :15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ
There is no evidence that the unrest in our congregation is the result of the writing of our minister in the Sword and Shield.
This is demonstrated by the fact that there is unrest throughout our denomination of churches.
While this simplifies our work- to use the writing of our minister in Sword and Shield as a scapegoat for unrest, we must recognize- based in part by our own discussions when we formulated this motion- that forcing our minister to stop publishing in this magazine will solve nothing.
Because the magazine is not the cause of unrest.
Out of love for the flock of Christ over which we are overseers, we should address the real cause of unrest.
The unrest is doctrinal.
It is the false doctrine which is refuted in the preaching and the writing by Rev Langerak.
Since this action will **solve** nothing, what **will** it do?
The result of this motion will be to silence the admonitions of the gospel that we hear every Sunday
It may bring the false, temporary, earthly peace of not having our conscience pricked by polemical, personally convicting, antithetical preaching of the Word.

Therefore, as a minority of the committee we recommend;

1. The consistory repents of lording it over the minister and rescind its decision, namely

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Grounds:

Rev. Langerak continues writing in and promoting the Sword & Shield as a co-editor with Andy Lanning, a deposed minister of the PRC who continues to live in the sin of schism.

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2. The consistory proactively work with, and communicate to the congregation:
 - a) Our desire and willingness to work for peace and unity based upon the truth of scripture. Which truth we feel is being brought to us faithfully from our pulpit through the preaching of the whole counsel of God, and also through the continued writings of our minister in books, as well as articles published in the Sword and Shield magazine.
 - b) Publish an explanation of the position of the consistory and our minister concerning the recent unrest in our denomination which we believe is caused by what we perceive to be two-fold, 1- the subtle infiltration of Federal Vision theology in our denomination, and 2- the unrighteous deposition of Rev Lanning with the resulting separation in the congregation of Byron Center, as well as in other congregations within our denomination of churches.
 - c) Express our willingness to meet on an individual/family, or /open format with a question-and-answer session, in order to bring a better understanding of the entire situation that has been caused by continued minimizing and misconceptions concerning the sinful doctrines that have been taught- and in some cases are still being taught and/or tolerated in our denomination.
 - d) Call for patience and longsuffering with fellow saints.
Ephesians 4:1-3 4 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
 - e) Convey our intention as a consistory to protest to the broader assemblies what we perceive as the unjust deposition of a minister in our denomination because of his rebukes for the sins of the denomination of the Protestant Reformed Churches

Andy Birkett

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