

June 3, 2014

Grandville Protestant Reformed Church  
Consistory c/o Dan Key, Clerk  
4300 40<sup>th</sup> St SW  
Grandville, MI 49418

Dear Consistory of Grandville PRC:

We are writing this letter to express our dissatisfaction with the preaching of Rev. Koole. Our concern has to do with both his style and content.

In stating our concerns to the consistory on family visitation to the style of Rev. Koole's preaching, the response has simply been that this has been Rev. Koole's style for many years. And although it is difficult to follow at first, after a period of time people tend to get used to it. We do not believe that the answer, "Well, yes, he is difficult to listen to but that's his style," is proper. A minister's style is of vital importance. If a minister's preaching style causes difficulties for the people to hear and receive the word, the style should be changed. James Daane points out in his book "Preaching With Confidence" the following:

"(although) the ability to empower the Word does not lie in us, it is within our potential, alas, to obscure and becloud the truth of the Word. We can place stumbling blocks and unnecessary offenses in the path that leads to faith in Jesus Christ....Preachers today can set up obstacles to the hearing of the Word in many different ways: by reducing the gospel to moralism, by self-righteous pride, by lazy sermonic preparation, by turning the pulpit into a personal stage, by bad grammar, poor speaking, disregard of logic. Unable to empower the Word, ministers can still make it difficult for others to hear the Word." p45

More importantly however, we find the content of the preaching (which is closely tied to the style) to be greatly lacking. We hear no common theme that is clearly introduced at the beginning, woven throughout the sermon, and brought to a clear and concise conclusion. We find the sermons to be disjointed, wandering this way and that, with many loose ends that may or may not be tied up. There are many sections of the sermon that do not apply to the main point of the sermon and are of no benefit (either doctrinally or practically) to the congregants. We have found ourselves wondering if there is a comprehensive sermon outline that Rev. Koole is working off of, or if he is just referring to some notes jotted down on various aspects of the text. Our concern is heightened when many times a sermon's third point is addressed in the four or five minutes before the end of the hour, leaving no time for a proper conclusion. In addition, much of the sermon material is dry, and academic, delivered with no passion.

We are very troubled at the state in which we find ourselves, for ourselves, but more importantly for our children. We have said before that we are fed, but it is so sparse and thin that it is not enough. Our question is this; "Are the Elders of Grandville content with the preaching that occurs Sunday after Sunday? Do you feel that it is all that it should be?" Our hope is that the Elders of Grandville PRC will recognize there is a deficiency and work with Rev. Koole, to the end that the sermons might improve and the congregation might experience preaching that is ordered, full, lively, expository, doctrinal, and practical.

Sincerely in Christ,

Dewey & Dawn Engelsma