

“Here We Stand – We Can Do No Other”

Sample Statement in Opposition to Amendment B, G-6.0106b

We, the <name of body, such as Session, Presbytery, or Synod>, oppose a literal interpretation of Amendment B and want to share our reasons with our Presbyterian brothers and sisters.

As witnesses to our Reformed Faith and as loyal Presbyterians, we believe that we must treat all people in a manner which reflects the teachings of Christ, our ordination vows, the Constitutional provisions of our Book of Order and the Confessions themselves, all of which are “the law” of our church. These values and these standards include the following:

- A. Our ordination vows require us to follow Christ who calls us to be inclusive. (G-14.0405 b).
- B. The Book of Order contains clear, mandatory inclusive language. (G-3.0401; G-4.0403; G-5.0103; G-5.0202)
- C. The Book of Order provides that Sessions and Presbyteries have the right and responsibility to ordain. (G-10.0102 I; G-11.0103n)
- D. The Book of Order provides for freedom of conscience with respect to the interpretation of Scripture (G-1.0301; G-6.0108)
- E. The Confessions state that they are subordinate to the teachings of Christ and Scripture. (The Confession of 1967 - 9.03; Westminster Confession - 6.175; Declaration of Barmen - 8.11, 8.12).

Amendment B, literally applied, would prevent most people from serving as ministers, elders and deacons in our church. Amendment B is inconsistent with the clear mandates for inclusiveness in the Book of Order and blocks the ordination of entire categories of people without exception and without regard to their character or qualities of leadership. Furthermore, the nature of sin as expressed in Amendment B is not an essential tenet of Reformed faith. We cannot comply literally with these provisions of Amendment B and also comply with the teachings of Christ, our ordination vows and the Book of Order – the core of our Presbyterian faith and law.

Therefore, we are called to honor the following principles:

1. We will be obedient to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture.
2. We will be instructed by the historic confessional standards of the church as a guide for our behavior.
3. We affirm the importance of faithfulness in all committed relationships.
4. We promise to uphold The Great Ends of the Church, our Book of Order, the essential tenets of Reformed faith, and our Call to be an inclusive community.
5. We believe that all persons who share our commitment to these values and these standards are eligible for ordination as ministers, elders and deacons, and we support the Authoritative Interpretation of Amendment B adopted by the 1998 General Assembly under which persons are not excluded categorically from ordained service but are judged on the basis of their lives and behaviors as individuals.