

Commission,

Keith, David, and I remain fully committed to our confession in the mediated agreement of March 2022. We remain fully committed to biblical reconciliation and have undertaken extensive efforts to that end. It has become evident that we lost your respect in spite of our passionate efforts to pursue biblical reconciliation. You even refused to meet with several RP elders willing to represent us to you.

We believe, as stated previously, that we have completed the defined steps from our mediated agreement and are ready to engage in reconciliation. We believe this is our God-given obligation and we intend to pursue this fervently.

We intend to pursue biblical reconciliation, as described in Col. 1:19-20: *“For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.”*

We lament that the entire RPCNA judicial process has been painfully devoid of the gospel. The gospel teaches us that reconciliation is not only possible, but is already accomplished. It is accomplished not by us, but for us. Reconciliation is not enabled by the adequacy of the humans involved, or by the sufficiency of their repentance, but by the power of Christ at the cross. The power of reconciliation is not in us, but in the peace purchased by Jesus' blood at the cross. By December 2020, before any commissions began, we began to faithfully confess our failures to God, and made numerous personal and public confessions. We have found peace with God and several of those who were offended. We lament that the RPCNA has never promoted the peace of Jesus found in the gospel through this process.

Furthermore, we are now convinced that you are preventing us from obeying God's command in Matthew 5:23-24 to leave your gift at the altar and go and be reconciled to your brother. You believe that this passage is not applicable to us because of Matthew 18, but we believe that we have already been disciplined by the church, and that Matthew 18 has been completed. This returns us to the point of seeking reconciliation from offended parties.

Below is a brief summary of the major issues we see in the process that you have presented to us for what you are calling reconciliation:

- Confusing reconciliation and agreement: Reconciliation means that I have admitted my sins and acknowledged their impact against another party, allowing for the grace of forgiveness and blood of Christ to cover those sins in our relationship. It does not mean that we are in agreement on all things. There will certainly be differences of opinion, perspective, and conviction. We have a spiritual obligation to go to those we have offended and deal with our sins against them through our confession and seeking their forgiveness. We do not have the same spiritual demand regarding our differences, but rather are called to love one another and live in grace with those who hold differing convictions, opinions, and perspectives.
- Preventing reconciliation: The biblical instructions for reconciliation (eg: Matt. 5:23-24) require the disputing parties to engage directly – there is no biblical warrant for a "priestly" overseer (the former investigators or the commission) to prevent one of the parties from initiating

reconciliation. Your counsel to offended parties not to meet with us is in direct conflict with God's command.

- Pre-approval from former investigators: the former investigators do not need to agree that we have listed everything that they think the offended parties want to hear from us. We are actively inviting those who are offended to bring their own perspectives. If there are additional offenses, we will encourage them to bring these to our attention themselves.
- Other aspects coming into our process: Concerns about other parties and their actions (eg: the actions of Jared Olivetti, the Immanuel congregation, the current Immanuel session, etc. especially after March 2022) are not our responsibility, are not relevant for our reconciliation, and are outside the scope of the mediated agreement.
- Mediation: If mediation is needed between the former ruling elders and other parties, it should come from neutral and local parties. The commission is neither neutral nor local.
- Wrong use of church discipline: You've admitted that in your judgment as members of the Synod's Judicial Commission in March of 2022, that we did not compromise our integrity as elders. If this is true, how did you conclude that we deserved suspension? It has become evident that this process is attempting to use church discipline to achieve punitive satisfaction of the offended rather than spiritual restoration of all parties. This is a fundamental misuse of church discipline.
- Role of the former investigators: The former investigators have satisfied their obligations as described in the mediated agreement. They have aspirations to serve as mediators, but their inherently biased role (as prosecutors) prevents them from serving in this capacity.

We have removed our church membership from the RPCNA to another branch of the Church. We voluntarily resigned as active elders in January of 2022. In September of 2022 the entire Immanuel congregation voted to leave the RPCNA. As such, we have taken every possible step to clearly remove ourselves from the authority of the RPCNA. **We no longer recognize the RPCNA as having any jurisdiction over us.** We will be pursuing biblical reconciliation immediately with those whom we have offended. We ask that you not interfere with this process.

We pray that this commission and the RPCNA will return to embrace the work of Christ on the cross as the foundation of all relationships in the Kingdom of God and not the law. Therefore, we ask that you end any further disciplinary action and allow us to depart in peace, recognizing that your disciplinary responsibilities are complete.

*"Such is the confidence that we have through Christ towards God. Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."*  
2 Cor. 3:4-6

In Christ,  
David Carr, Ben Larson, and Keith Magill