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July 26, 2019,

Dear Renewal Friend,

In its 5<sup>th</sup> sederunt, the 145<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) approved Pathway "B" as presented by the Special Committee of Former Moderators\*. In the 10<sup>th</sup> sederunt, remits to enable this change in doctrine and practice were approved for consideration under the Barrier Act (see below for the wording of the remits). At our meeting in July, the Renewal Fellowship Board discussed what response we might voice on behalf of the Fellowship. Like many in The PCC, we wrestled with a range of emotions, ideas, and counsel. One dominant response was dismay. We commend the following response to each of you as you ponder and reflect.

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"We are grateful to the Special Committee of Former Moderators for their diligence in presenting a report that fulfilled their mandate to offer a way forward. We are also very appreciative of the commissioners who worked hard to word remits that were deeply graceful in their design and intentions.

"However, after serious reflection, the Board agreed to take an unprecedented step, namely to comment on a decision of the General Assembly. We believe the 145<sup>th</sup> General Assembly's adoption of Pathway "B" does not arise from authentic Biblical thinking, which is one of our three main goals for renewal in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. We therefore align ourselves with the 91 commissioners who voted against that decision.

"We also therefore cannot support the remits which, if approved through the Barrier Act process, would alter our doctrine and practice to a position not rooted in authentic Biblical thinking.

"As we discussed these actions by Assembly, we expressed regret that so many of the resources within our denomination have been dedicated to this issue to the detriment of other essential gospel ministry. We reaffirmed our intention to continue seeking renewal within The PCC by leading each other to authentic Biblical thinking, powerful Spirit-led prayer, and effective Gospel witness.

**"To lead ourselves and The Presbyterian Church in Canada  
to authentic Biblical thinking, powerful Spirit-led prayer  
and effective Gospel witness."**

“While the Board is of one heart in our love for God, for our denomination, and for each other, we were not of one mind on our response to the actions of Assembly. The absence of full unity, along with the intensity of our convictions, was and remains painful and challenging. The distress we experienced in formulating this response serves as a reminder that in this and in all things, we are called to embrace all our sisters and brothers with the grace and truth found in Jesus.”

Faithfully,

The Board of the Renewal Fellowship

**Remits:**

1. That the following be approved and remitted to presbyteries under the Barrier Act: The Presbyterian Church in Canada holds two parallel definitions of marriage and recognizes that faithful, Holy Spirit filled, Christ centred, God honouring people can understand marriage as a covenant relationship between a man and a woman or as a covenant relationship between two adult persons. That congregations, sessions, ruling and teaching elders be granted liberty of conscience and action on marriage.

2. That the following be approved and remitted to presbyteries under the Barrier Act: That congregations and presbyteries may call and ordain as ministers and elect and ordain as ruling elders LGBTQI persons (married or single) with the provision that liberty of conscience and action regarding participation in ordinations, inductions and installations be granted to ministers and ruling elders.

**Barrier Act Process:**

Presbyteries are now being asked to approve the remits. If a majority of presbyteries approve – and that majority consists of more than half of the total number of presbyters – the matter will go to the 146<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in June 2020 for final approval.

\* The minutes of the 145<sup>th</sup> General Assembly can be found at <https://presbyterian.ca/gao/ga2019/>