



The SPC Post

July/August 2011
Volume V, Issue VII
Spotsylvania Presbyterian Church



Denominational Update ***Building on the Foundation***

By Alan Hager

As there have been a number of discussions related to the change in ordination standards within the PCUSA denomination and what our response should be as a congregation, one of the sentiments I have picked up on multiple times is the concern that we are potentially changing into a church that is dramatically different than the church we once were. On the one hand, change is a constant dynamic in life and so we should expect a consistently developing nature of our church family. That is a good thing. Change is especially foreseeable as the session fulfills its commitment to seek a new way forward in light of the denominational decision.

But, on the other hand, it is important to stay true to our foundation and build on the good heritage that has been entrusted to us. This, too, is a good thing and the very thing our session is committed to doing as we face the future. I would like to reflect on our vision and core values as a church and the commitment the session has to honoring and deepening this foundation.

Vision Statement: “SPC is a caring community equipping disciples of Christ for worship and ministry in the Reformed tradition.”

Core Values: In striving to fulfill this vision we seek to be a church that is...

Biblical - applying God’s Word to every area of life and structuring our life together around its truth. This involves preaching God’s Word and focusing on responding to God’s revelation in worship. It also includes educational programs and ministries of the church that help people understand more about the Bible and how to live according to its truths, especially encouraging the development of leaders. We will continue to pursue these priorities in the future. We will also submit to the Bible’s authority in how we govern our communal life as a church body, including standards for leadership.

Evangelical/Reformed - building on the heritage of the reformation we will teach the key doctrines of reformed faith. We will celebrate the grace of the gospel and God’s initiative in advancing His kingdom in the world through joyful, Christ-centered worship and the ministries of the church. Likewise, we will seek to bless our community and future generations of the church by preserving God’s truth and continuing the legacy of reformed teaching. Consistent with reformed doctrine we will promote ministries that encourage responsible living in the world, particularly helping people bring renewal and biblical teaching to their work and areas of vocation.

Missional – fulfilling God’s mission for our church in our community and around the world by sharing the good news that salvation is in Christ and Christ alone. This takes place through prayer, financial giving, and direct participation in mission efforts. It involves an “outward” focused vision to meet our neighbors where they are and engage them through all the ministries of the church. It also includes involvement in church planting and preparing for the future of the church through supporting seminaries and ministerial students- ministries we will continue to pursue in the future. We will also seek to be a blessing to our community through sacrificial service in meeting the tangible needs of the area.

Family Focused – lifting up biblical principles regarding the family and supporting the needs of families in our church and community. We do not intend to be pure by avoiding the world around us or casting judgmental statements towards individuals and groups who do not share our convictions. We desire to be gracious in meeting people where they are, even in the midst of brokenness. But we will also be clear in addressing the family issues of our day from a biblical perspective including the nature of marriage as one man and one woman, the need to refrain from sexual activity outside of marriage, and the importance of godly leadership in the home.

(continued on page 2)

Connectional - being part of a Presbyterian form of government with significant participation in ministry together with other reformed churches. We value being in a structured relationship where there is accountability and mutual support. This includes the Presbyterian model of electing leaders and a collegial relationship between elders and pastors. It also involves sharing core beliefs and values with those who are partners in ministry.

As you can see, there is great potential for us to be true to our vision and core values as we navigate the road ahead as a church. Certainly there will be a degree of change, as there must be for any healthy group, but there will also be a commitment to the core foundation and relationships that make SPC such a special church family. And any change that might be envisioned will be integrated with the goal of preserving our good heritage as best as possible.

Don't forget to check the church website for important information on denominational matters. If you have thoughts or concerns you would like to relay to the session, please speak to me or any member of session. We are grateful for your continued prayers.