

May 2, 2008

Pacific Presbytery, Presbyterian Church in America

Dear Brothers:

Our presbytery has been contacted by members of Pacific Presbytery (PCA) regarding the status of Mr. C. Lee Irons, formerly a ministerial member of the Presbytery of Southern California (OPC). On motion our presbytery approved this letter and determined to send it to you.

In October 2003, following judicial decisions by the Presbytery and the General Assembly, Presbytery pronounced the censure of indefinite suspension from office upon Mr. Irons, a censure determined earlier at the conclusion of his trial in January 2003. This censure was publicly read to him during a regular meeting of Presbytery in accordance with the requirements of our Book of Church Order. It had not been read to him earlier because the appeal process was not completed until the summer of 2003.

In anticipation of the reading of the censure, Mr. Irons made a statement renouncing the jurisdiction of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Nevertheless, the Presbytery determined that such renunciation could not prevent the judicial process from being completed, and Mr. Irons stood before the body to hear the censure. Mr. Irons was not formally erased from the roll of the Presbytery until February 2004.

Therefore, although the Presbytery subsequently acknowledged Mr. Irons' renunciation of its ecclesiastical authority, it did not thereby lift the censure. Within the bounds of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Mr. Irons is not recognized as a minister in good and regular standing and is not supposed to preach in OPC pulpits. His status is that of an unrepentant offender who no longer holds ordained office or membership in The Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Had Mr. Irons remained in the Presbytery as an officer under suspension, he would have retained his ministerial credentials, albeit with severe restrictions. By renouncing the jurisdiction of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Mr. Irons gave up his credentials. Whether or not he is recognized as an ordained minister by another Christian denomination or group is beyond the control of the OPC. His use of the phrase "termination of censure" on his web site when referring to his erasure from the rolls of our Presbytery is his own characterization and is not the understanding of the Presbytery of Southern California. Any use of the descriptive term "Reverend" in our communications with Mr. Irons immediately after his erasure from the rolls merely constitutes an oversight and should not be interpreted as evidence of formal recognition of credentials.

We have been asked to give you information with respect to Mr. Irons status when he left the OPC. The facts are the facts, and we present them to the best of our abilities. Since the PCA, like the OPC, is a member of NAPARC, we only ask that you recognize that the Presbytery of Southern California (OPC) acted honorably when it disciplined Mr. Irons and consider the ramifications of such action with respect to inter-church relations.

Cordially in Christ,

Donald G. Buchanan, Jr., Stated Clerk

cc: Credentials Committee