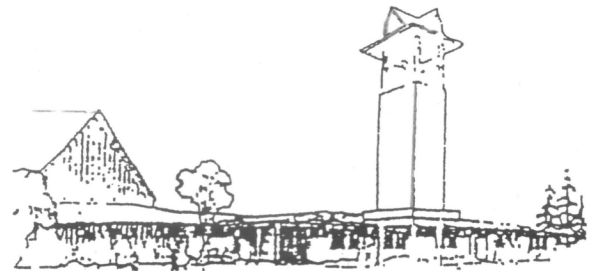


# Parkway Presbyterian Church

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*For your progress and joy in the faith,  
so that you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 1:25-26)*

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March 23, 2026

Dear Presbyters of the Pacific Northwest,

I write to you today, my beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, to explain the reason for the overture that the Session of Parkway Presbyterian Church has passed on March 22, 2026 to send on to our May 8, 2026 meeting for you to consider. The subject of homosexuality and the sanctity of marriage are obviously fraught issues in both our culture and our dear denomination, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC). It was in seeking clarity on these issues that I stood on the floor of the **Forty-fourth** General Assembly (2024) and directed the Assembly to read the Position Paper on Human Sexuality, approved and endorsed by the **Thirty-seventh** General Assembly in 2017. At the time I had assumed that the Position Paper on Human Sexuality had supplanted the previous Position Papers on Homosexuality (revised 2014 by the **Thirty-fourth** General Assembly) and the Sanctity of Marriage (approved 2004 by the **Twenty-fourth** General Assembly). It was only later that I was informed that I was incorrect about the status of these two crucial Position Papers. By God's grace, I hope to clarify and correct this error that I believe others share with me.

In consultation with TE Jeff Jeremiah (honorably retired), the former Stated Clerk of our denomination, I helped to craft this overture to re-affirm and restore the Position Papers on Homosexuality and the Sanctity of Marriage to the website. Jeff Jeremiah, with the help of Gordon Miller, Moderator of the **Thirty-fourth** General Assembly and National Leadership Team moderator (2015-2016), helped me to understand the reasoning behind removing the documents from the website in 2016. Jeff Jeremiah wrote to me the following:

“On June 26, 2015 the US Supreme Court legalized the marriage of homosexuals. While this decision clarified the status of married homosexuals, what was not clear was the rights of churches and religious groups, which on religious grounds opposed this judicial ruling. In the EPC, fears were expressed to the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) and the National Leadership Team (NLT) that churches could face civil lawsuits from LGBTQ+ groups alleging illegal discrimination for refusing to employ homosexuals or to make their facilities available to such groups. One OGA/NLT response to these concerns was to assemble a group of nationally-renowned religious freedom experts to help our churches defend their religious rights if they found themselves as defendants in a civil court. They recommended that our churches insert into their articles of incorporation and bylaws specific references to the Scriptures, Westminster Standards, and the EPC Constitution as forming the doctrinal base of their church. Another response came from EPC churches fearful of the appearance of the Position Paper on Homosexuality and the Position Paper on the Sanctity of Marriage on the EPC website. Since material on the EPC website is available to the general public, they claimed the presences of these

two Position Papers in their public presence ‘placed a target on the back’ of EPC churches. Due to the lack of clarity in the courts as to the religious rights of churches in the face of the LGBTQ+ agenda at the time, it was proposed that the Position Papers on Homosexuality and the Sanctity of Marriage be removed from the EPC website but made available upon request. A mechanism was set up to ensure that only those in the EPC would receive those Position Papers upon request. At no point in time was the deletion or recission of the Position Papers considered by the OGA or NLT. On the floor of the **Thirty-sixth** General Assembly, a motion was considered that would have had the effect of deleting the Position Paper on Homosexuality as an official Position Paper, as it would not only have removed the Position Paper on Homosexuality from the EPC website, it would also have removed making the position paper available upon request. That motion was soundly defeated [Minutes of the **Thirty-sixth** Generals Assembly, p. 54).

It should also be noted that the **Thirty-sixth** General Assembly took the same action with the Position Paper on the Sanctity of Marriage. Again, this document was diametrically opposed to homosexual marriage that had been declared legal by the U.S. Supreme Court. The General Assembly approved a motion that the Position Paper on the Sanctify of Marriage be removed from the EPC website and made available only upon request (Minutes of the **Thirty-sixth** General Assembly, p. 54).”

While having these Position Papers available upon request may have served amid the fear and confusion following the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in Obergefell v. Hodges, such fears and confusion are no longer valid. Further, the current iteration of the EPC website lists the public-facing Position Papers, but has no mechanism to request the Position Papers on Homosexuality and the Sanctity of Marriage nor any indication that these documents even exist. Ironically, all of the Minutes of General Assembly are freely available to download by anyone and, if one knows where to look, these position papers are available in those minutes, violating the will of the **Thirty-sixth** General Assembly.

What then shall we do? The simple solution to the problem is to restore the Position Paper on Homosexuality and the Position Paper on the Sanctity of Marriage to the website. This action would make these documents available to Sessions and Pastors navigating these fraught issues and give wisdom from our denomination’s history. The restoration of these papers to the website, coupled with the re-affirmation that these papers, would also clarify that these remain the public positions of the EPC. The overture the Session of Parkway Presbyterian Church considered and passed would enact the simple solution.

I apologize for the length of this letter, but given the complexity of the history that led us to the current situation, it seemed necessary to arm you with a full set of information so you, my beloved fellow presbyters in the Pacific Northwest, could consider this overture carefully that we may discern the mind of Christ together. It is my hope that the re-affirmation and restoration of these two Position Papers will aid my beloved presbytery and denomination as we navigate together how best to minister and evangelize in an age and culture of sexual confusion and sin. Let be suffice that God’s Word is neither fearful nor confusing regarding homosexuality and the sanctity of marriage. Let us not be fearful nor confused either.

In Christ’s Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wm A Heming". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

the Rev. Wm. A. Heming  
Pastor, Parkway Presbyterian Church