



A letter from the Board of Elders

(March 2021)

As you may recall, early last year, prior to the pandemic, the Elders invited our lead pastor, Scott Anderson, to take a few Sundays to help Lambrick consider again what the Bible says about women, leadership, and authority in the local church. These three teachings and one from the previous June can be accessed on Lambrick's website - www.lambrick.com/pages/women-and-leadership-in-the-church.

As stated at that time, our church comes from a tradition that has always sought to honour women as equal in status before God and fully made in God's image. That said, this tradition has also interpreted the Bible's teaching to put limits on the role of women when it comes to ministry and leadership. Over the years, our church and leadership have made changes in our belief and practice in relation to women's roles, inviting and affirming women as active participants in the whole life of the church, ministry, and leadership, *with the only exception being participation on the board of elders*. Each of these changes have come as a result of reading scripture with fresh eyes and allowing the whole counsel of God, not just a few isolated texts, to guide our convictions and practices.

Over the last number of years as a Leadership Team, our study, prayer, conversation, and listening have led us to a unity of conviction. ***Interpreted in context, the gospel of Jesus Christ (as revealed in the Old and New Testament) opens the door for women and men to participate together fully as equal partners in life and leadership.*** Because of this, in collaboration with Scott Anderson, our desire and prayer is that this extended season of congregational teaching, prayer and discussion will lead to greater **clarity** on the biblical invitation, **unity** as a congregation and **courage** to make the vital change to our bylaws* that is a barrier to women serving on the Board of Elders.

Though a few may construe this as bowing to culture, for us, this change is about faithfulness to the gospel, commitment to our mission, seeking the unity of the church, overturning injustice, receiving the gifts of the whole body of Christ, honoring women like Jesus does, and ultimately *honoring Jesus*. Yes, there are **many** reasons for us to make this change.

Our intention had been to lead toward a vote of change last spring (2020), but due to the chaos of the pandemic, we reluctantly put the conversation on hold. However, as stated at our recent AGM, we are renewing this congregational process in this season – asking everyone to revisit the teaching and resources with an open heart, praying with hunger and hope for God to meet and lead us. We are inviting everyone to come together for a congregational gathering on **May 2nd** to talk, listen, pray, and clarify the plan for the vote. And then, on **May 16th**, all of our members will be invited to participate in a **discernment vote**.

Although we recognize that this may cause anxiety for some, our prayer and longing is that, rather than fueling division, this conversation would ***deepen our discipleship, heighten our biblical understanding, and further our commitment to the gospel and all that it entails.*** However you feel about the questions before us, we ask that you would lean into this conversation and process with a spirit of humility, love for others, and faith for God to teach and lead us in the way of the gospel – for God's glory in, through and among us.

Seeking and following Jesus with you,
The Board of Elders & Scott Anderson (lead pastor)

* Our bylaws, written in the 1960's, specify that elders are men. Changing this to allow women to serve as elders requires "a special resolution passed by a 75% majority of members that are present at a General Meeting."