



EASTMINSTER PRESBYTERY

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Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Today Amendment 10-A, sent down to the presbyteries by the 219th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), has received a majority of affirmative votes, thus changing the language of the denomination's ordination standards as found in G-6.0106b of the *Book of Order*. Included in this mailing is a "Question and Answer" fact sheet that addresses what these changes will likely mean.

As Stated Clerk and General Presbyter of Eastminster Presbytery, we would like to suggest that these changes should not result in celebration or lamentation, but conversation. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has been divided over the issue of homosexuality and ordination since 1978. Despite the passage of Amendment 10-A, we remain a divided denomination. It is to be expected that some will be elated, having waited over 30 years for this day. Others will be saddened, believing that we as a denomination have abandoned important restrictions within our ordination standards. Still others will remain conflicted on the issue.

So what does Amendment 10-A mean for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Eastminster Presbytery, and your congregation? It means that the application of ordination standards have shifted from the denominational level and has been returned to presbyteries and sessions/congregations. The bodies that ordain—presbyteries ordain Ministers of Word and Sacrament and sessions ordain elders and deacons—will decide on a case by case basis who does or does not meet the ordination standards of the church. This means that Eastminster Presbytery and the session of the church of which you are a member now have even greater responsibility in discerning the will God as it relates those whom they ordain.

For now, let us assure you that the two of us will be striving to develop conversations that will assist Eastminster Presbytery and its sessions to explore the selection of those who will be ordained. This is not a time for hasty decisions. It is a time to explore together how we will live into the changes in our ordinations standards and live together in a time of diversity. Until such conversations can begin, let us be in prayer for discernment.

In Christ's service together,

Dale Riley, Stated Clerk

Dan Schomer, General Presbyter