

To the Congregation of New Hope Presbyterian Church:

As many of you know, Session met on Saturday, May 9, 2015. We wanted to provide a brief summary of the decisions that were made. At this meeting, Session voted to amend our wedding policies to the following:

*A wedding is a celebration of God's gift of marriage for the well-being of the entire human family, and an expression of Christian discipleship. To that end...*

*Weddings will only be performed at New Hope that are*

- a. Approved by a Pastor (Teaching Elder)*
- b. Between two adults in a loving, committed relationship*
- c. Where at least one person is a member (or child of a member) of New Hope.*

### **What Changed?**

- Language that stipulated that weddings be limited to *a man and a woman* was replaced by, *between two adults in a loving, committed relationship.*
- Language was changed to limit those who may get married at New Hope to someone who is a member *(or child of a member) of New Hope.*
- Provisions for allowing the use of New Hope by other churches was deleted. Only members of New Hope (or their children) will be allowed to hold weddings at New Hope.

### **How Was This Decision Made?**

In June 2014, the General Assembly of the PCUSA voted to allow congregations and ministers, in states where it is legal, to decide for themselves whether or not they would conduct weddings for same-sex couples. In October, the State of Colorado legalized same-sex marriages. The issue of whether or not same-sex weddings would be performed at New Hope became both pertinent and pressing.

Session determined to embark on a year-long process of study, discussion and discernment, informed by input from our members. We were heartened by the respectful, caring and loving tone of our congregational conversations. Session was not unanimous in its opinion; multiple viewpoints were expressed. Ultimately a majority of 9-5 reached this decision.

### **What's Next?**

This was meant to be a brief summary of our decisions. We know there will be many questions and concerns. Opportunities for this will include the Pastors Q&A after each service on Sunday, May 10. There will be a more detailed letter coming in the mail. Session members and pastors are available for individual conversations and clarification.

We recognize that this decision will be difficult for some of us to accept. Though there may be disagreement, we believe there is still a place for all of us at New Hope. Even as we agree to disagree, ultimately we affirm that our unity is in Jesus Christ and his Mission.

Yours in Christ,

The Session of New Hope