

48 The committee chose to introduce its report with Warfield’s stirring reflection for the following
49 reasons. First, each member has felt poignantly the burden of the terrible effects of sin and evil
50 as we carried out our work. While we have not lived through the events personally, we have not
51 considered them unfeelingly. We give thanks to our God through the Lord Jesus Christ for the
52 promised victory that will be realized in the eventual and inevitable eradication of sin’s power
53 and presence from the cosmos. Second, we remained mindful that “we do not wrestle against
54 flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of
55 this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12). This great
56 struggle lies behind all the conflict that believers face in this world.

57 As the committee formed its report, a serious question demanded an answer: whose story
58 are we telling? Our work intersected with the lives of dozens of people, all in ways that were
59 painful in one manner or another. In answer to this question, we found the words of James H.
60 Thornwell immensely valuable:

61
62 All that I assert in any case is that it is an indispensable duty in whatever inquiries we engage to
63 aim only at the truth. We are not bound to endeavor after universal knowledge, but we are bound
64 to guard against error and to receive nothing that has not the stamp of truth. All truth is not
65 obligatory, but nothing but truth is obligatory on the understanding. No man, under any
66 circumstances, has a right to think a lie. He can no more without guilt administer poison to his
67 understanding than he can administer it to his body.²
68

69 In this report we advocate nothing but the truth. In other words, we are seeking to tell truth’s
70 story in love (Eph. 4:15). With that in mind, we were constantly aware that neither the process of
71 our investigation nor the product of this report will please everyone. Whatever one’s view of our
72 inquiries and conclusions, we want it to be clear that we sought to conduct our work thoroughly
73 and justly, always aiming at the truth, seeking above all to please the Lord, whose eyes are in
74 every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good (Prov. 15:3).
75

76 **Executive Summary**

77

78 The church in America is enduring an age in which corruption is being exposed and
79 allegations of the same are increasing. Over the last several years, the number of ministers
80 exposed as frauds and abusers has only increased, bringing great shame and reproach on the
81 name of Jesus Christ and the witness of His Church. Although far smaller and relatively
82 unknown to broader culture, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) has not avoided this
83 phenomenon. For this reason, some have maintained that the OPC has a systemic abuse problem.
84 With the advent of social media, the allegations by those who are not in positions of institutional
85 authority are quickly and easily communicated, often garnering wide hearing and broad support.
86 The OPC must respond righteously to these allegations, deal carefully with evidence, and
87 commit resolutely to pursue justice, mercy, and faith (Matt. 23:23).

88 Mrs. Stephanie Chernyavskiy, with the assistance of a group of advisors, counselors, and
89 OPC ministers, has made serious allegations of domestic, criminal, and ecclesiastical abuses. She
90 alleges to have suffered these sins and crimes at the hands of her birth mother, her adoptive
91 parents, elders and ministers in the Presbytery of the Southeast (PSE), a minister in the

²James Henley Thornwell, *Whatsoever Things Are True: Classic Discourse on Truth* (1855; Birmingham, AL: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2005), 46.

92 Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), a neighbor, and others. In some of her allegations, she
93 has named the PSE and even the entire OPC as being complicit. The Neon Investigation
94 Committee examined hundreds of documents, listened to many hours of testimony, and
95 interviewed over a dozen people, spending hundreds of man-hours investigating the allegations
96 and available documentation. Our conclusions, documented and then outlined below, are that the
97 allegations against Mrs. Chernyavskiy's birth mother and a former neighbor are credible and
98 supported by the evidence. However, the most serious allegations against the people and entities
99 named in our mandate are either unfounded or impossible to prove. Despite this, these
100 allegations have been broadly circulated, aided by a willingness of some to receive a report and
101 act on it before hearing the whole matter. We have included recommendations accordingly.

102

103 I. Overview of the Work of the Committee

104

105 A. Formation of the Committee

106

107 Two key public events served as catalysts for the PSE's action to form this committee.
108 The first was a lecture delivered by Ms. Eileen Scipione at Providence Reformed Church
109 (RPCNA, Carnegie, PA) on October 30, 2024. Among other things, this lecture publicized
110 multiple allegations against Mr. and Mrs. Seth and Sheryl Long, the adoptive parents of Mrs.
111 Stephanie Chernyavskiy (née Long), Rev. and Mrs John and Sara Belden (the Beldens were not
112 named in the lecture), and Rev. Dr. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr., of the PCA (Dr. Pipa is Rev. Belden's
113 father-in-law). The lecture was removed from all platforms on the afternoon of October 31,
114 2024, after Rev. Jay Bennett called and expressed his concerns to the pastor of the host church.³
115 The second major event occurred on December 19, 2024, through the airing of a podcast episode
116 by *Sons of Patriarchy* (SoP) entitled "[The Lion of Judah Louder Roars: Abuse in the OPC Part](#)
117 [1.](#)" Along with host Mr. Peter Bell, Mrs. Chernyavskiy made numerous allegations against the
118 Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (NRPC) session, its members, the PSE, the OPC, and Dr.
119 Pipa.⁴

120 Most of the allegations the committee investigated have been made publicly, but one key
121 private event is crucial for understanding the origins of the controversy. In September 2022, Mrs.
122 Chernyavskiy delivered two letters to her parents after a week of vacation their families spent
123 together. The first letter served as a preface to the second, explaining the purpose of the
124 communications. It included these words:

125

126 I'm not sharing this with any expectations. Im [*sic*] not sharing it and hoping for certain reactions or
127 responses. I am sharing it because I feel you deserve to know and because I've been counseled by
128 many people to do so not the least of which have been several clinical therapists and pastors. There
129 is mo [*sic*] pressure from me for you to read the letter or to open yourselves up to a discussion about
130 its contents. I'm simply ready to share and whenever/if ever you want to I'm here to discuss it and
131 any questions or comments you may have.

³ Ms. Scipione addressed this and other issues in a now deleted Facebook post published shortly after the lecture was removed. She modified this statement on November 15, 2024. The revised version is available as Appendix 2.

⁴ The committee will also refer to allegations in another podcast [Sacred Thoughts - Episode 9](#), by Scott Lencke, published January 2, 2025. This recording received far less publicity. There has also been a large amount of social media interest in this matter.

132
133 The second letter outlined errors that Mrs. Chernyavskiy believed the NRPC session committed
134 in the process of excommunicating her in 2015. It also included many other allegations against
135 her former fiancé and Rev. Bennett specifically. The Longs did not respond to the second letter.⁵
136

137 **B. The Work of the Committee**

138

139 The committee's work consisted of the following phases:

- 141 **1. Initial Information Gathering** (April 16-May 18): The committee read over and
142 listened to all available material. This included voluminous information submitted by
143 past and present members of the Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church Session
144 (NRPC), John and Sara Belden, carefully reviewing Eileen Scipione's presentation,
145 the *Sons of Patriarchy* episode, and *Sacred Thoughts*.
- 146 **2. Categorizing Allegations** (May 18-June 18): The mandate required investigating
147 allegations, and so naturally we needed to identify and organize them. The main body
148 of the report contains a topical categorization determined by the committee.
- 149 **3. Sub-Committee Interviews** (June 18-September 30): Different combinations of the
150 committee's membership interviewed the following persons on the dates specified:
 - 151 **1) June 17, 2025 – Rev. John Belden:** former minister of the PSE who served in Neon
152 from 2004 to 2010. He and his family lived in Wilmington, NC from 2011 to 2016.
 - 153 **2) June 18, 2025 – Dr. Joseph Pipa:** PCA minister and former president of Greenville
154 Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Dr. Pipa is Rev. John Belden's father-in-law.
 - 155 **3) June 24, 2025 – Members of the NRPC Session from 2015: Rev. Lacy Andrews,
156 Rev. Hank Belfield, Rev. Jay Bennett, RE Seth Long**
 - 157 **4) July 10, 2025 – Mr. and Mrs. Seth and Sheryl Long:** adoptive parents of Mrs.
158 Stephanie Chernyavskiy.
 - 159 **5) July 17, 2025 – Members of the NRPC Session from 2009: Rev. Lacy Andrews,
160 Rev. Hank Belfield, Rev. John Belden, RE Doug Brink, RE Seth Long, RE Frank
161 van Hoeve**
 - 162 **6) July 25, 2025 – Rev. ██████████** retired ministerial member of the PSE
 - 163 **7) July 25, 2025 – Rev. ██████████** ministerial member of the Presbytery of the
164 Northwest (PNW).
 - 165 **8) September 4, 2025 – Ms. Eileen Scipione:** certified biblical counselor who has
166 counseled and assisted Mrs. Chernyavskiy.
 - 167 **9) September 11, 2025 – Mrs. Cydney Scaggs (née Long):** adopted daughter of Mr.
168 and Mrs. Long and adopted sister of Mrs. Chernyavskiy.
 - 169 **10) September 16, 2025 – Mr. Gene Smallwood:** Long family attorney
 - 170 **11) September 16, 2025 – Rev. and Mrs. John and Sara Belden**
 - 171 **12) September 30, 2025 - Rev. and Mrs. Fred and Alaine Hofland:** Former minister of
172 Trinity OPC, Wilmington, NC, and friends of Mrs. Chernyavskiy and Ms. Scipione.
173

⁵ On January 23, 2025, Ms. Alaine Hofland commented on one of Mrs. Chernyavskiy's Facebook posts with these words, "I'm so sorry Stephanie. You wrote your parents a heartfelt letter two years ago. I believed then that they would have responded to you with care and a desire to understand how you were abused. I know that broke your heart. It moved me with such compassion towards you and made me love my daughters more. I love you so much."

174 The reader will certainly notice the absence of Mrs. Chernyavskiy from this list. The
175 committee made numerous attempts to speak with her. On April 30, 2025, she contacted Rev.
176 Ken Montgomery, clerk of the PSE, communicating her inability to participate in the
177 committee’s investigation until the conclusion of ongoing criminal investigations regarding
178 charges she filed with the Kentucky State Police (KSP) on October 12, 2024. She sent another
179 communication on June 13, 2025, expressing her willingness “to share evidence, witness
180 statements, and other forms of evidence such as photographs and emails, messages, etc.” On
181 behalf of the committee, Mr. Cloy responded on June 18, 2025, requesting two different
182 meetings with Mrs. Chernyavskiy, one to hear her testimony and a second later meeting for
183 members of the committee to pose any clarifying questions. These meetings did not occur. Mrs.
184 Chernyavskiy was in the latter portion of her pregnancy (her baby was born in early August). On
185 July 10, 2025, she requested that we coordinate with Rev. Dr. Tim LeCroy (PCA) as one of her
186 representatives. Messrs. Cloy and LeCroy exchanged emails throughout July and August and
187 into September. Eventually the committee simply requested a written statement from Mrs.
188 Chernyavskiy and provided four key questions for her consideration. Through Dr. LeCroy she
189 sent the committee a statement, additional allegations, and two folders of evidence/supporting
190 documentation on September 20, 2025, which the committee has reviewed thoroughly.⁶ The
191 committee received permission to make the two folders of evidence available to the PSE.

192 193 **4. Report Formation** (September 8–October 2)

194 195 **II. Explanation of the Report’s Format and Contents**

196
197 Due to the sheer volume of information, the committee believed that a topical review of
198 the allegations would be most conducive to clarity. Since this report includes details about her
199 birth mother, the allegations raised by Mrs. Chernyavskiy span over thirty years. The reader *must*
200 *bear this in mind* since this topical arrangement will result in occasional chronological overlaps.
201 Reminders of this will occur occasionally. Relatedly, the committee largely restricted itself to the
202 allegations that have been made *publicly*. As such, the reader can expect the following general
203 order for each categorized allegation: a brief historical introduction, the allegation(s) articulated
204 by Mrs. Chernyavskiy or a representative, reference to published or received support for the
205 allegation(s) if available, followed by a review of testimony and/or evidence in response.

206 Because omniscience is the prerogative of God alone, the committee will simply not be
207 able to address every allegation, nor include every piece of information, nor make definitive
208 judgments on all points. The committee believes the categories below adequately and accurately
209 represent Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s testimony of the events and the answer of various individuals and
210 groups to it. Additionally, at times the committee will include its opinion or judgment concerning
211 the veracity of the allegation. Finally, to maintain both respect and clarity through the report, the
212 committee may refer to Mrs. Chernyavskiy as “Stephanie” when discussing the aspects of her
213 history that occurred before her marriage in October 2016.

214 This report has already referenced the sensitive nature of its contents. This requires all
215 who receive it to handle it with understanding and propriety. In the pursuit of that understanding,

⁶ The communication that Mrs. Chernyavskiy sent on September 20, 2025, included nineteen allegations against Rev. Bennett and twenty-five against Mr. and Mrs. Long. Some of these allegations were aired publicly, some were new to the committee.

216 the committee utilized the definition of “abuse” from the *Report of the Special Committee to*
217 *Help Equip Officers to Protect the Flock*.⁷ With respect to propriety, the committee is also aware
218 that there are many who have strong opinions and interest in this difficult and complex situation.
219 In this light, the committee simply makes two requests. First, remember the Golden Rule,
220 “Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the
221 Prophets” (Matt. 7:12). Treat this report as if it were written about you or those you know and
222 love. Second, remember the words of Nicodemus, “Does our law judge a man before it hears him
223 and knows what he is doing?” (John 7:51). In other words, before hastening to conclusions—
224 whether mentally or in this report—remember what the Scriptures say, “He who answers a
225 matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him” (Prov. 18:13). Please read the entire report
226 in order, consider well its contents, and only then form conclusions.⁸

227

228 **III. Topical Review of Allegations**

229

230 **A. Allegations of Domestic Abuse**

231

232 **1. Against Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s Birth Mother**

233

234 Stephanie’s life began in great difficulty and hardship. By all accounts, her birth mother
235 was criminally negligent in the treatment of her daughter. She suffered from severe
236 malnourishment, inhumane living conditions, and, according to Stephanie, attempts by her own
237 mother to drown her when she was very young. She was eventually abandoned after being
238 hospitalized in critical condition, at which time Child Protection Services (CPS) intervened. As
239 is common in situations of heinous child abuse leading to foster care and adoption, she was
240 diagnosed with Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD) and several other conditions.⁹ Notably,
241 Ms. Scipione stated in her interview with the committee that she was mistaken concerning this
242 RAD diagnosis and that Mrs. Chernyavskiy now has documentation proving that none of the
243 providers she saw concluded that this was her diagnosis. The Longs submitted documentation
244 that contradicts this claim.¹⁰

⁷ Abuse is the pattern of sinful, selfish mistreatment of another made in God’s image, whereby moral agency, freedom of conscience informed by God’s Word, and God-given human dignity is violated by harmful acts (physical, sexual, verbal) or schemes to perpetuate oppression and unbiblical control (Exodus 3:9–10; Deuteronomy 26:6–8; Psalm 10; Isaiah 19:20; Isaiah 30:12–13; Isaiah 49:26; Matthew 20:25–28). Acts of abuse are vile practices arising from selfish ambition and bitter jealousy, born from sinful desires in the heart (James 3:16). Physical abuse encompasses actions that harm the body including but not limited to beatings, sexual assault, physical or sexual coercion, sleep deprivation, starvation, or confinement (ACBC, Committed to Care, *Statement on Abuse and Biblical Counseling*, section VIII.A).

⁸ The committee sought legal counsel (not Mr. Smallwood) to review the legal and ethical propriety of this report.

⁹ The committee would not typically divulge medical or psychological diagnoses in a report such as this. However, these topics have been widely discussed in public forums, some by Mrs. Chernyavskiy herself, others by those representing her like Ms. Eileen Scipione. For this reason, the committee is simply repeating what is in the public record at this point.

¹⁰ This document contained reports from several medical providers and social workers that reference a previous diagnosis of RAD. The committee does not believe these documents, and others like it that we received, are suitable for publication.

245 Mr. and Mrs. Long both attested to Stephanie’s great fear of water when they first
246 received her into their home around the age of two-and-a-half, which is itself consistent with the
247 impact of her birth mother’s attempts to drown her. There is far more we could write about
248 Stephanie’s tragic early history. With sympathy the committee believes that these sins and
249 crimes against Stephanie were indisputably abominations in God’s sight and extremely
250 damaging to her.

251
252 **2. Against Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s Adoptive Parents: Seth and Sheryl Long**
253

254 As mentioned above, Seth and Sheryl Long first assumed the care of Stephanie as foster
255 parents when she was around two-and-a-half, eventually adopting her around age five in 1997.
256 She was one of three adopted sisters, along with Tiffany (1998) and Cydney (2000). The Longs
257 also had biological children beginning in 1999. It is important to note that both Stephanie and
258 Cydney were classified as special needs foster adoptions. Mrs. Long holds a BS in Social Work
259 (Eastern Mennonite University, 1989) with extensive mental health training and experience in
260 both clinical and residential settings.

261 In her public testimony, Mrs. Chernyavskiy made serious allegations about Mr. and Mrs.
262 Long’s parenting. She alleged repressive disciplinary methods, including her parents holding her
263 hand over a hot stove to teach her to fear hell; strong spankings/beatings that left bruising and
264 blood; being forced for up to twelve hours a day to copy from the Scriptures, Westminster
265 Standards, and a concordance at the behest of Dr. Pipa and Rev. Belden; and being deprived of
266 food. Stephanie also alleged her parents showed extreme partiality against the adopted children
267 in favor of the biological children. Ms. Scipione stated in her lecture, “From age four to twelve,
268 Stephanie felt some level of security, but when she was twelve, her adopted mom gave birth to
269 her own child, and then everything changed. Stephanie noticed that the adopted children were
270 treated very differently than the biological children, and Stephanie developed what’s called
271 RAD.” Despite these challenges, Ms. Scipione alleged that Stephanie’s parents did not seek
272 professional help, claiming the Longs only sought counsel from pastors and mentors, especially
273 requesting Dr. Pipa to provide counseling to Stephanie. Finally, she claims that the stress and
274 trauma from her upbringing and sexual abuse from a neighbor caused her to develop a PTSD
275 induced blindness around age sixteen.

276 Mr. and Mrs. Long affirmed that they did administer corporal discipline while raising
277 their children, but not to the degree that Stephanie alleged. They vehemently denied ever holding
278 Stephanie’s hand over a stove or starving and isolating her as she described. Her sister, Cydney
279 (now Mrs. Cydney Scaggs), also testified that her parents never resorted to such cruelty. Mrs.
280 Scaggs recounted times of having to sit in corners, times when Stephanie was required to work
281 or write alone while Mrs. Long homeschooled the other children, and even occasions of strict
282 discipline. She denied that her parents ever deprived them of food. She also stated that as an
283 adopted daughter, she did not agree with Stephanie’s allegation of partiality, though she admitted
284 that each child had their own unique needs and required care specific to them.¹¹ It is also

¹¹ See Appendix 3, Letter by Cydney Scaggs, also found in the FOIA Packet 13-25-0146-24-26, pages 66-68 in document. This packet of information and recordings were obtained through a FOIA request made by Mr. Long and then made available to the committee. It also included the criminal complaint filed by Mrs. Chernyavskiy on October 12, 2024, and all the interviews conducted by the KSP detective that will be cited below. The committee possesses and has made all this FOIA information available to the presbytery.

285 significant to note that the first biological child was born in 1999, before Cydney was adopted.
286 This calls into question the timeline described by Ms. Scipione (see lines 267–271), since the
287 Longs began having children when Stephanie was around seven years old, not twelve.

288 Regarding the allegations of counseling and outside help, both the Longs and Dr. Pipa
289 deny that he ever had a counseling relationship with the Long family, let alone Stephanie. He
290 recalled that Dr. George Scipione, Ms. Scipione’s late husband, was the only biblical counselor
291 involved with Stephanie. Beyond this, the Longs have records of pursuing treatment for
292 Stephanie’s various conditions. This included, but was not limited to, Dr. Joseph Neumann (PhD,
293 Psychologist, Nouthetic Counselor, Regional Psychologist for the Tennessee Department of
294 Children’s Services), an eye specialist named Dr. Williams, other eye specialists in Whitesburg,
295 Pikeville, Lexington, and Louisville, KY, and Johnson City, TN, and Ms. Polly Yarling, a
296 licensed clinical social worker (LCSW). In addition to this, the Long’s communicated that they
297 pursued help from therapists, psychiatrists, and psychologists at Kentucky River Community
298 Care, sought assistance for her non-verbal learning disorder at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital
299 with a clinical special educator, and obtained consistent medical help, including physical and
300 occupational therapy services. Mrs. Long attests that they began seeking treatment for problems
301 related to Stephanie’s vision at age four, not at age sixteen, since she had been diagnosed with
302 amblyopia and cone-rod dystrophy.

303 Fairly recently, Mrs. Chernyavskiy authored a work entitled *Letters to Mama Rita*, in
304 which she reflected upon the difficulties of living with RAD. She sent it to Mr. and Mrs. Long on
305 March 20, 2024. In the sixth chapter entitled *Reactive Attachment Disorder II*, she wrote, “For
306 all my many attempts to manipulate, annihilate, and devastate my ‘new’ parents they, bless their
307 hearts, never stopped trying. Therapy after therapy in the hopes I would finally ‘connect’.
308 Counseling, programs, discipline, and structure all while years of prayers and tears continued to
309 be sent up to heaven.”¹² Her own words describe a very different situation compared to what she
310 has recently alleged.

311 The committee faced two significant challenges as it listened to testimony from Mrs.
312 Chernyavskiy and others concerning these allegations of domestic abuse. The first was the effect
313 of the very long passage of time. Memories grow hazy, and facts can get lost. The second was
314 the drastic degree to which the accounts differed between Mrs. Chernyavskiy and those who
315 were the subject of her allegations. The committee also discovered significant contradictions
316 between the past documented words of Stephanie compared to her present ones. At this point, we
317 believe it best to allow that tension to stand and urge the reader to consider the testimony and
318 evidence.

319 **B. Allegations of Sexual Abuse**

320 **1. Against Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s Birth Mother**

321
322 In her lecture on October 30, 2024, Ms. Scipione said, “Stephanie’s mother would sell
323 her to any man who would show up with a bottle of booze for her mom.” This is the only
324 allegation of sexual abuse against the birth mother. While all the sins and crimes of Stephanie’s
325 birth mother against her are a very important part of her history, some do fall outside the scope
326 of the committee’s task and reach. Simply put, it is beyond the ability of the committee to
327
328

¹² See *Other Documents* in the Supplemental Information Folder.

329 determine the veracity of this claim, though we reiterate that we have no doubts about the
330 extreme hardship of her early years.

331

332 **2. Against a Former Neighbor**

333

334 Mrs. Chernyavskiy made numerous allegations of sexual abuse perpetrated by a
335 neighbor. The ecclesiastical discipline of the NRPC session that occurred during this time
336 becomes a serious point of contention for her. At this point the report will focus only upon the
337 sordid events of this sad chapter of history for the Long family. In 2008, Mrs. Long gave birth to
338 a daughter who continues to suffer from a serious medical condition. These complications
339 required the Longs to seek medical care frequently and, for that reason, to be out of the home
340 regularly during that time. In the proceeding months, the Longs discovered that in their absence,
341 serious sins were occurring to and among their three adopted daughters. Especially grievous was
342 sexual abuse by their neighbor, though initially the neighbor's involvement was unknown.

343 During the spring of 2009, Mrs. Long found great quantities of candy wrappers under
344 Stephanie's mattress. This understandably raised many questions. As they inquired about their
345 origin, the Longs found that the neighbor had been purchasing them candy. Sadly, they also
346 discovered evidence that the three adopted girls had been visiting pornographic websites and
347 chatrooms, and even soliciting sex from strangers (during her interview with the committee, Mrs.
348 Scaggs discretely confirmed that this behavior occurred). Immediately after learning about this,
349 the Longs contacted Dr. Neumann (lines 292–294). The three girls met with him on May 4,
350 2009, after which he referred them to Ms. Polly Yarling (LCSW). They met with her weekly
351 beginning on May 15, 2009, and through her therapy with the girls, the Longs learned that
352 Stephanie and her adopted sisters had been engaging in sexual immorality with one another.
353 They later discovered that the neighbor may have been involved sexually.

354 The matter was immediately referred to Social Services and the Kentucky State Police.
355 As part of their investigation, CPS referred the three girls for sexual assault exams, which
356 occurred on June 9, 2009. The Longs met with KSP officers on June 22, 2009. On July 30, 2009,
357 the female neighbor, Christy Lynn Polly, was charged with three counts of Sexual Abuse in the
358 First Degree. She was found guilty of each of these counts on August 25, 2010. She received a
359 prison sentence of five years on each count, but each sentence was suspended, and she was
360 placed on supervised probation for five years instead. She was also fined, required to complete a
361 sex offender treatment program, and was prohibited from any contact with the complaining
362 family and children as well as any minor children.

363 In light of the foregoing information and other documentation that we received, the
364 committee concludes that it is beyond question that the Long daughters were victims of this
365 predatorial, criminal sexual abuse. This was and is egregious. Sadly, however, it is not the whole
366 story. They also committed great sins of sexual immorality against God and one another, though
367 the committee believes that these sins must be understood within the context of the neighbor's
368 heinous criminal actions, which predated and doubtlessly influenced their conduct. These latter
369 details have not been included in any of the public allegations Mrs. Chernyavskiy has made over
370 the last year, and, we regret to add, it seems that they have been deliberately omitted. This
371 information has significant bearing upon a proper understanding of the NRPC session's
372 discipline that occurred in May 2009 (see below, D.2.a).

373

374

375 **3. Against Rev. John Belden**
376

377 In both podcasts and Ms. Scipione’s lecture, Mrs. Chernyavskiy states unequivocally that
378 she was sexually molested by Rev. John Belden, both when he was her pastor in Neon, KY
379 (2004-2010) and during the time she alleges that she was imprisoned in his home (November
380 2011-June 2012). Speaking of Rev. Belden, though not by name, Ms. Scipione said, “Also, no,
381 she doesn’t have proof of this, many times the man of the house, he would grope her sexually in
382 the middle of the night, she slept on a futon in the family room near the entrance of his bedroom.
383 She was so frozen with fear, she could barely sleep.” Mrs. Chernyavskiy accused Rev. Belden in
384 the following words:

385 Years before that [the discipline of May 2009], I had tried to report to my parents that John
386 Belden had been molesting me during counseling sessions, and I have some evidence of that. And
387 he was on the session that chose to do the church discipline for the “quote unquote” sexual
388 immorality by the neighbor. So, sitting there with him doing the admonitions and the rebuke and
389 everything was incredibly painful, knowing what he had been doing in the closed-door counseling
390 sessions with him.
391

392 She later said this about her time in the Belden home, “I slept on a small futon right outside of
393 John Belden’s door. And many times, he would come in the middle of the night on his way back
394 from the bathroom and molest me.” These are allegations of extremely heinous sin and criminal
395 conduct.
396

397 Rev. Belden was shocked when presented with these allegations. He had not listened to
398 any of the podcasts and so had not heard that he had been accused of these atrocities until he was
399 contacted by a member of the committee. He resolutely denied committing them. The committee
400 asked Mrs. Cydney Scaggs if Stephanie ever confided in her about sexual molestation from Rev.
401 Belden. She denied ever hearing anything about this during her years with Stephanie, saying, “I
402 would trust [Rev. Belden] just as much as I would trust my dad, and I don’t trust many people.”
403 Mrs. Belden provided testimony that during Stephanie’s time in their home in Wilmington, NC,
404 she did not sleep on a futon other than the first night or two, but rather chose the top bunk bed in
405 a room she shared with one of the Belden children. Additionally, Mrs. Belden explained that
406 around the time Stephanie entered their home, Rev. Belden was being treated for sleep apnea. He
407 slept with the aid of a CPAP machine, which required him to tape his mouth shut. She contended
408 that sneaking out in the middle of the night would have required him to take all this off and shut
409 down the machine. As a very light sleeper, she claims she would have heard if Rev. Belden was
410 getting out of bed.

411 Mrs. Chernyavskiy proffered the evidence to the committee for her allegation against
412 Rev. Belden on September 20, 2025. It was labeled in her secondary evidence folder as “Sexua
413 [sic] abuse by John Belden during counseling—didnt [sic] want to be alone with him. Tried
414 telling mom.”¹³ It contains two questions written in Mrs. Long’s handwriting and does not
415 substantiate such a serious allegation. Rev. Belden ought to be presumed innocent of this charge
416 unless and until proven guilty.
417
418

¹³ This information is in the Supplemental Information Folder, Secondary Evidence (available only to PSE).

419 **4. Against Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s Former Fiancé**
420

421 After her time with the Beldens, Stephanie returned to the Long’s home, which began the
422 second stage of what she called imprisonment (the first being while at the Belden home, more
423 below). She attended a conference for singles at the Machen Retreat Center in Virginia in the
424 Fall of 2013. There she met a man to whom she eventually became engaged in August of 2014.¹⁴
425 She remained engaged to him until leaving the Long home in February 2015, at which time she
426 returned to Mr. Ilya Chernyavskiy, whom she would eventually marry. These events relate very
427 closely to the second occasion of ecclesiastical discipline discussed below (section D.2.b) but are
428 in themselves significant enough for their own consideration.

429 In the SoP episode, Mrs. Chernyavskiy alleged not only that her former fiancé sexually
430 abused her, but that the NRPC session ignored her pleas for help. These also are allegations of
431 very serious sins and crimes. She said, “I didn’t want to marry him. I didn’t want to court him.
432 And it was wrong of me, but I used him because I was still fighting and trying to find a way to
433 get back to Ilya. I endured incredible abuse, some of which landed me in the emergency room
434 from him.” Ms. Scipione claimed Stephanie “tried to show the doctor’s report to her father when
435 she got home, but of course, her father and Pastor Jay refused to even look at any evidence at the
436 doctor’s report.” It is important to note that the alleged sexual abuse from the former fiancé
437 which she claimed resulted in the emergency room visit occurred while she was visiting him in
438 Pennsylvania. The committee found evidence that Mr. Long did tell Stephanie to stop telling
439 others of some very egregious conduct of her former fiancé, which she was apparently doing
440 after she left the Long home in February 2015.¹⁵ The actions she was describing (for which Mr.
441 Long rebuked her) were sexually abusive in nature, but they were not committed against her.
442 Rather, they had been told to her by her former fiancé about previous sins he had committed. The
443 committee did not contact or interview the former fiancé.

444 When presented with these allegations, the Longs told a very different story and provided
445 email documentation to verify their account. Stephanie did in fact go visit her former fiancé
446 during their engagement, traveling several times to Pennsylvania. The Longs recall that
447 Stephanie did require a trip to the emergency room during a visit to Pennsylvania in January
448 2015. She was admitted and remained in the hospital January 10-14, 2015. The Longs contend
449 that the reason for this hospitalization was due to ongoing feminine health-related issues in
450 Stephanie, not sexual assault. Upon her return to Kentucky, Stephanie had multiple follow-up
451 medical appointments, including with an OB-GYN. The Longs possess both documentation and
452 emails between them and Stephanie that corroborates this account. As far as the committee could
453 ascertain, neither the providers in Pennsylvania, nor any of the three medical providers Stephanie
454 saw in Kentucky after she returned home, reported any sign of sexual or physical abuse.

455 As mentioned above, Mrs. Chernyavskiy alleged that she was ignored when she
456 attempted to report the alleged crime to Rev. Bennett and Mr. Long, claiming that Rev. Bennett
457 called her “an unreliable witness.” In response to this, Rev. Bennett provided an email
458 interchange between Stephanie and himself, dated May 18, 2015.¹⁶ This occurred after the NRPC

¹⁴ The committee will not use this former fiancé’s name in this report as it was not used in public discourse.

¹⁵ FOIA Packet 13-25-0146-75, page 16 in document.

¹⁶ Dear Pastor Jay

459 session began the process of disciplinary action against Stephanie for the second time, covered in
460 more detail below (section D.2.b). Rev. Bennett and the NRPC session neither recalled nor found
461 any record of Stephanie reporting criminal sexual conduct to them perpetrated against her by her
462 former fiancé. The email referenced above seems to indicate a confession of sin on Stephanie’s
463 part (in which the former fiancé would have been guilty as well), even contrition for such sin, but
464 it does not contain any allegations as she claims to have reported to Rev. Bennett or her father
465 (see footnote 16).

466 **5. Against Rev. Jay Bennett:**

467 In the SoP episode from December 19, 2024, the following dialogue occurred. We include
468 the entire section for clarity:

469 **Peter Bell:** Was the church aware of the abuse that you had undergone physically and spiritually?
470 Or was there no opportunity to—not no opportunity—was there both no opportunity nor your
471 desire, honestly, from what you had been through, to tell them what had happened to you?

472 **Stephanie Chernyavskiy:** You mean the sexual abuse by the neighbor?

473 **Peter Bell:** Yeah, sexual abuse by the neighbor, by your ex-fiancé, by Jay, by others.

474 Mrs. Chernyavskiy then enlarged on several points, but she did not correct Mr. Bell that Rev.
475 Bennett was never alleged to have committed any sexual abuse against her. The committee
476 believes this is an instance of irresponsible use of language by both Mr. Bell and Mrs.
477 Chernyavskiy.

478 **C. Allegations of Kidnapping, Trafficking, and Unlawful Imprisonment¹⁷**

479 **1. Kidnapping, Trafficking and Unlawful Imprisonment: Seth and Sheryl Long**

480 In 2011 when Stephanie was nineteen, she began attending the Charles W. McDowell
481 Center for the Blind in Louisville, KY (Center hereafter). This institution provides high-quality
482 services and resources to Kentucky residents who are blind or visually impaired. While there,
483

I don’t know how to talk to the session about this but I have told dad and was wondering if maybe you could either forward this to the other session members or how it should be dealt with.

You asked me the other night if I had anything else I needed to confess or talk about. Truth is that yes. I need to confess to having inappropriate and sinful relations with [my former fiancé] in the form of sexual activity. I lied to many people about our activities and was not pure in my relationship with [my former fiancé]. I tried to use it as a way to make myself feel closer to him but it didn’t work so I just kept trying. Regardless of my reasons it was wrong of me to do this and it was sinful. I need to confess to sending explicit information via email et cetera and engaging in sexual activities that should only be done inside marriage and for lying about it. I am sorry for this and have asked God to forgive me. Now I am seeking your forgiveness as well. I know that saying “I’m sorry” doesn’t fix what I did and I know that I deserve to be disciplined. As I said the other night I’m not sure what it should be but I understand that discipline should happen.

Sincerely
Stephanie Long

¹⁷ See Appendix 4 for Kentucky’s legal definitions of the alleged crimes.

490 Stephanie met Mr. Ilya Chernyavskiy and the two began a romantic relationship. Stephanie
491 described the beginning of her time at this Center:

492
493 Age nineteen, I was sent to a Rehabilitation Center for Blind People, where you learn to read
494 Braille, walk with a cane, etc. Until then, I had been so controlled and so programmed, I didn't
495 even know who I was, what I liked, what I, you know—it was odd to me that people would just, if
496 they wanted to eat in the middle of the night, they would eat in the middle of the night. If they
497 wanted to go somewhere, they could just go somewhere. Growing up, that didn't happen. And here
498 I was, nineteen and a half and I didn't know I was allowed to even do those things. So I did
499 experiment with—I made an email; I made a social media profile. And I began dating. We weren't
500 supposed to date in that OPC church. You don't date, you court in an almost arranged marriage
501 setup kind of thing. And I wasn't allowed to be dating, but I did. And I met a wonderful man. There
502 were aspects of our relationship that weren't pure, but our intentions were pure. We planned to get
503 married, we got engaged. He bought a ring.

504
505 Ms. Scipione included this description of Stephanie and her relationship with Mr. Chernyavskiy,

506
507 “Stephanie is very smart and very patient, and I would say, very godly. So she wanted to help
508 others. But it was there [at the Center], for the first time in her life, she met a safe person. He was
509 older than her and a devout Roman Catholic from Uzbekistan. They fell in love. He bought a ring.
510 He wanted to marry her, but when her father and mother found out about that, they decided they
511 had some sort of biblical right to kidnap her.

512
513 In the podcast interview, Mrs. Chernyavskiy claimed that when Mr. and Mrs. Long found out she
514 was dating, they abruptly and forcibly removed her from the Center under the guise of needing to
515 return home due to a family emergency. She claimed that Mrs. Long entered her room at the
516 Center, hurried her along, and even pulled her out to the car without giving her an opportunity to
517 retrieve many of her belongings, most notably her violin. She stated that a friend who was on the
518 phone with her at the time was a witness to these events. The Longs then took her, against her
519 will, back to the family home. Mrs. Chernyavskiy alleged that she was forced against her will to
520 speak with a therapist in Tennessee, “to see if she [the therapist] could convince me to ‘quote
521 unquote,’ give up my sin and to end my relationship with Ilya, because I was still fighting,
522 saying, ‘no, I love him, he loves me, we’re engaged, we’re going to get married, and I’m going
523 to do everything I can to get back to him.’” She alleged that several days later, Mr. Long pushed
524 her into the back seat of a family vehicle and drove her against her will to Wilmington, NC
525 without communicating where he was taking her.¹⁸

526 Mrs. Chernyavskiy filed this and additional information with the Kentucky State Police
527 as a criminal complaint on October 12, 2024.¹⁹ On June 12, 2025, a Grand Jury of the Letcher
528 Circuit Court rendered a “no true bill and order of dismissal” for the charges of false
529 imprisonment against the Longs. They dismissed the case on grounds that “insufficient evidence

¹⁸ For the sake of brevity, not all the details of Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s testimony are included. The committee refers the reader to the SoP episode cited above for her full accounting of the events for not only these allegations, but for those that follow.

¹⁹ This interview is available in the Supplemental Information Folder, FOIA, File name “KYleNichols_202410121355_BWC2110614-0_edited_(transcode).”

530 was presented to warrant an indictment.”²⁰ Feeling at liberty to begin sharing her information
531 publicly following this determination, from June 13 to 26, 2025, Mrs. Chernyavskiy published a
532 series of Facebook posts with images and documentation she alleged exposed abuse in the OPC.

533 The reader must remember that the allegations of kidnapping refer to Stephanie’s
534 removal from the Center in November 2011, trafficking refers to her being transported against
535 her will from Kentucky to North Carolina (November 2011) and back (June 2012), and false
536 imprisonment against the Longs refers to the time she was allegedly held against her will at their
537 home from June 2012 until she left in February 2015. The “no true bill” decision was only
538 regarding the charge of false imprisonment against the Longs. The review of the false
539 imprisonment allegations against the Beldens is below.

540 Moving back to 2011, Stephanie had been excelling in her learning at the Center and
541 earned the Student of the Year Award. The Longs traveled to Louisville to attend the award
542 ceremony on November 2, 2011. Mr. Long attests that, while he was there, a member of the staff
543 pulled him aside and informed him that Stephanie, then nineteen, was frequently leaving the
544 Center with a man. At times she would leave overnight and over the weekends.²¹ Shortly after
545 receiving this news and in order to pursue more information, Mr. Long contacted Rev. David
546 Dively, a pastor at the church Stephanie had been attending while at the Center. He informed Mr.
547 Long of the presence of a Russian sex trafficking ring in Louisville. To be clear, there is no
548 evidence that Mr. Chernyavskiy was involved in this alleged ring; however, this information
549 greatly alarmed the Longs. Additionally, the Longs had been in the habit of monitoring
550 Stephanie’s internet activity because of the history mentioned above (lines 345–348). Mrs. Long
551 reported that she discovered messages being exchanged between Stephanie and Mr.
552 Chernyavskiy, some of which were sexually explicit. They also found that she and Mr.
553 Chernyavskiy were regularly committing fornication where he lived and in conditions that
554 further alarmed the Longs²². After consulting with Mr. Gene Smallwood (attorney) and Ms.
555 Polly Yarling (Stephanie’s therapist), they decided to withdraw her from the Center, which they
556 did on November 4, 2011. They did not consult with Stephanie.

557 As Stephanie stated, the Longs removed her from the school under the guise of a family
558 emergency. Beyond this correlation, their versions of the event differ significantly. The Longs
559 claim that Stephanie was waiting for them outside the Center when they arrived and that there
560 was no forcible removal from her room. Mrs. Long said that they also had other children in the
561 vehicle with them and that she never even entered the building. They deny Stephanie’s
562 allegations of physical struggle in the vehicle, though they did affirm that Mr. Long was angry
563 about the illicit relationship between Stephanie and Mr. Chernyavskiy, and that Stephanie was
564 angry at times both during the trip home and after. The Longs also affirmed that they drove
565 Stephanie from their home in Kentucky to the Belden home in Wilmington, NC in November
566 2011, though again, they deny Stephanie’s version as containing falsehoods and embellishments.

²⁰ See Appendix 5.

²¹ FOIA Packet 13-25-0146-81, 80, pages 10-11 in document.

²² FOIA Packet 13-25-0146-69, page 22 in document. In her statement to the committee, Mrs. Chernyavskiy admitted only to committing “sinful premarital intimacy twice” with Mr. Chernyavskiy.

567 Mr. Long alleges that Mr. Chernyavskiy contacted him, threatened him, and stated his intention
568 to come and take Stephanie by force if necessary, though she denies there were threats.²³

569 Several of these details are beyond the reach of this committee. We simply cannot verify
570 one way or another all that occurred when the Longs removed Stephanie from the Center. It is
571 clear that some of her possessions were left there. Regarding the violin, the Longs recalled
572 Stephanie taking it with her but admitted that they could be wrong. In the end, it is the
573 committee's understanding that she did recover the violin, though we have not been able to
574 determine exactly when and under what circumstances.

575 The committee feels obligated to revisit how Stephanie termed her relationship with Mr.
576 Chernyavskiy during her time at the Center. She admitted that their dating included aspects that
577 were not pure and expressed some remorse for this in the SoP episode (line 502). Nevertheless,
578 the committee believes this admission understates what actually occurred. Stephanie admitted to
579 the sinfulness of their conduct in a letter she wrote to Mr. Chernyavskiy, sent to the Longs from
580 Sara Belden on February 7, 2012. More seriously, emails from Stephanie on August 14, 2014,
581 and September 13, 2014, to her parents graphically portray rough sexual treatment she describes
582 having received from Mr. Chernyavskiy in 2011. The committee did not believe that publishing
583 the specifics of these details would be appropriate, but we determined it was necessary to make
584 the reader aware that this documentation in Stephanie's own words exists.

585 The committee does believe that a letter that Stephanie gave to her parents on October 11,
586 2012 was appropriate to publish.²⁴ It was sent a little less than a year after her removal from the
587 Center, after she returned home to Kentucky from the Beldens:

588
589 I was thinking about something today that made me feel very sad and very grateful. I was thinking
590 about last year at this time and how much trust I broke and how the choices I made hurt our
591 relationship and my sin was/is so ugly. I thought about how I lied over and over to you and went
592 against every thing you taught me. I realize you forgive me and I am very thankful for this because
593 I keep being reminded of how much I don't deserve your forgiveness. I know God forgives me
594 because I've asked Him to and He promises to and that is so comforting, but I am constantly
595 reminded of how much I don't deserve it. I'm not sure what other people do on an anniversary of
596 a time of rebellion but I'd like to write you a thank-you poem. I am also going to pray and thank
597 God for His love and protection which seem overwhelmingly strong in light of this situation.

598
599 I remain Forever His
600 Stephanie Nicole Long

601
602 We include these details because in our judgment it sheds a very different light on what
603 Stephanie has labeled kidnapping, trafficking, and false imprisonment. The Longs were
604 concerned for the safety and well-being of their blind daughter, whom they believed was being
605 sexually exploited by a man who was a stranger to them. Given the circumstances, as they were
606 related to us, and given the history of Stephanie being both a victim of sexual abuse and
607 perpetrator of sexual sin, the committee understands why Mr. and Mrs. Long acted as they did:

²³ FOIA Packet 13-25-0146-81, page 10 in document. This is a contact report by the Center for the Blind, dated 11/21/11. At the end it states, "Then Ilya said on the phone that he was thinking about taking a trip up to where Stephanie lives, because he loves her and really cares about her, but he also knows the consequences."

²⁴ The poem mentioned is not included. She wrote a similar letter dated December 8, 2011.

608 they intervened on behalf of their daughter to protect her.²⁵ Their decision to take her to the
609 home of a family they trusted (the Beldens) seems reasonable, given the circumstances. That
610 said, since Stephanie was a legal adult, it was completely within her legal rights not only to
611 refuse being brought home, but also to file criminal charges against her parents if she believed
612 they had committed crimes against her. The Grand Jury who heard Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s
613 presentation of her case and evidence did not find sufficient cause to proceed to an indictment for
614 false imprisonment.²⁶ It is worth noting that the standard for an indictment in a Grand Jury is
615 probable cause, a significantly lower standard than “proof beyond a reasonable doubt.” Mrs.
616 Chernyavskiy stated in a Facebook post on June 13, 2025, that she was told the vote “was very
617 close.” Since the proceedings were secret, the committee is uncertain how Mrs. Chernyavskiy
618 received this information.²⁷

619 As mentioned above (lines 445–448), when Stephanie was engaged to her now former
620 fiancé, the Longs allowed her to travel to Pennsylvania multiple times. This is hardly consistent
621 with her being imprisoned. Additionally, Mr. Long provided the committee with a texting
622 conversation between him and Mr. Chernyavskiy from March 16 to 17, 2020. In it, Mr.
623 Chernyavskiy asked if the Longs would be willing to have his wife Stephanie and their daughter
624 stay with them for several weeks, citing concerns about sickness and quarantine measures in the
625 city.²⁸ If Mrs. Chernyavskiy had been so cruelly and criminally treated by her family for all those
626 years, one wonders how she would ever feel safe going there on her own again. If Mr.
627 Chernyavskiy was aware of this history, it seems inconsistent to desire to send a wife and little
628 daughter to people who had posed such a threat. The committee believes that this interchange
629 between Mr. Long and Mr. Chernyavskiy demonstrates not only a great measure of
630 reconciliation between the two families (more below), but also that the Longs posed no threat to
631 her and never did.

632
633
634

²⁵ Rev. Mahaffy expressed his understanding of Mr. Long’s intention in the private Facebook chat (mentioned below), see FOIA Packet 13-25-0146-39, 38, pages 52-53 in document, where he said the following while referring to conversations he had with Mr. David Nakhla about Mr. Long, “What is described as kidnapping he does not deny, but it was an intervention to protect you from someone who was sexually active with you (sorry, tmi).”

²⁶ See Appendix 5.

²⁷ Mr. Gene Smallwood, the Long’s attorney, confirmed both of these aspects related to the Grand Jury process in Kentucky. He also claimed that when Commonwealth Attorneys desired an indictment, most often they will get it. He also informed the committee that not even he knew what the Grand Jury vote was, and that a Commonwealth Attorney would risk sanctions by communicating that information to anyone. In his committee interview, Rev. Mahaffy said, “from what I’ve heard a majority favored returning it but it was short of the supermajority required so there was a decision not to prosecute.”

²⁸On March 16, 2020, Mr. Chernyavskiy wrote, “I hate to ask, could she [Stephanie] and [our daughter] stay with you guys for a couple weeks, maybe 3?” Later after discussing more details, Mr. Chernyavskiy said, “Hence my thought that it would be safer in the mountains, less contacts. If anything at least Stephanie would FEEL safer there.” On March 17, 2020, after deciding to remain in the city, Mr. Chernyavskiy wrote, “Stephanie and I discussed it last night and confirmed this morning: She will stay here. As much as she wants to be with you guys, she doesnt [*sic*] want to risk bringing the bug there.”

635 **2. False Imprisonment: Rev. and Mrs. John and Sara Belden**
636

637 From November 2011 to June 2012, Stephanie lived with John and Sara Belden in
638 Wilmington, NC (see lines 608–609). While there she attended Trinity OPC, then pastored by
639 Rev. Fred Hofland. In her lecture Ms. Scipione described this time as follows:
640

641 [John and Sara Belden] held her against her will for seven months until she repented and became a
642 member of the church they attended. They kept watch on her at all times, locking the doors and they
643 wouldn't let her near a phone to call for help. She was forced to pay rent and didn't get paid for the
644 enormous amount of housework or babysitting she did. They finally broke her spirit...[allegation of
645 sexual molestation addressed above]...She was so frozen with fear, she could barely sleep. But
646 finally, she acquiesced. She said, 'Okay, I'll join the church.' So on that day, she repented and joined
647 the church, her parents took her back and made her a prisoner in their isolated rural home for over
648 three more years.
649

650 Mrs. Chernyavskiy also referred to the seven months and ten days at the Beldens' as
651 imprisonment in the SoP episode, also claiming that they forced her to work for them and to pay
652 them out of her Social Security stipend. In the criminal complaint interview mentioned above
653 (lines 526–527), she alleged to law enforcement that she was forced to pay \$500 a month to the
654 Beldens, who then left her with only about \$50 for herself after she paid for medications.²⁹ She
655 also recounted attempting to seek help in various ways, but that she was inhibited by the Beldens
656 from doing so, even saying, "I couldn't have called the police if I wanted." She also claimed that
657 Mrs. Belden forced her to take a pregnancy test while she stood there and watched while Rev.
658 Belden stood outside ready to spank her if she did not comply.

659 In response to these allegations, the Beldens provided extensive testimony and
660 documentation. Here is a representative sample of portions of communications received by the
661 committee:
662

- 663 1) **December 31, 2012**, from Stephanie to the Beldens: "I remember last time this year
664 and I really enjoyed being there with you all. I am now on the computer and am able
665 to email which I hope to do more of in the future."
- 666 2) **January 5, 2013**, from Stephanie to the Beldens: "I hope school is going well [*sic*] I
667 know it can be hard when there is the great outdoors to explore and conquer but I
668 think of you often and hope ti [*sic*] is going well. Has Misty killed any more snakes?
669 I hope she is a good dog and keeping an eye on you guys! :)"
- 670 3) **May 8, 2014**, Stephanie to a Belden: "I miss you all so much too and have many find
671 [*sic*] memories of my time spent with you in NC. Looking forward to visiting you in
672 July!!"
- 673 4) **July 21, 2014**, email from Sara Belden inviting friends to visit Stephanie when she
674 was in Wilmington for a wedding: "Stephanie Long will be here for the wedding.
675 Since she is only in town until Monday a.m., we would like to open up our home
676 Saturday after the wedding reception for anyone who would like to come visit. I
677 would be happy to provide sandwich fixings, as well."
- 678 5) **October 23, 2014**, Stephanie to Sara Belden seeking addresses to invite people to her
679 upcoming wedding (see above).

²⁹ Recording, KYleNichols_202410121355_BWC2110614-0_edited_(transcode), 40:25-41:00.

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- 6) **February 17, 2015**, from Sara Belden to Stephanie, shortly after she left the Long home with Mr. Chernyavskiy: “You are like a big sister to them...[referring to the Belden girls]”
 - 7) **June 24, 2021** Stephanie with Sara Belden [five years after marrying],
Sara: “Maybe we will cross paths in Neon sometime!”
Stephanie: “That would be amazing! We go down to visit mom and dad so maybe!!!! Miss you all!
Later Sara said, “I’m glad we could be there for you and it definitely was an experience jumping from having young ones to one in late teens/college!”
Stephanie: “Does [name redacted] have an idea of what she wants to do in college? I really did enjoy my time with you all (after the first month or two) ☹️
I don’t really remember much of the first month if I’m honest.

693 The Beldens’ testimony also differs significantly with Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s allegations of abuse
694 and imprisonment. Mrs. Belden did affirm helping administer the pregnancy test, but in this way,
695 “[Stephanie] said she was scared she could be pregnant and asked about finding out, so I bought
696 her a test to take and explained to her how to use it. She did it on her own, privately, and it was
697 negative. I do not think John was even aware of this at all.” Mrs. Belden said that Stephanie
698 “joined seamlessly into our family life” and that “she played piano for church, had an active
699 social life, and she would even spend the night at some friends’ house, often multiple nights in a
700 row.” Regarding the claims of forced work, the Beldens confirmed that Stephanie did help with
701 household chores and paid them \$65 a week to help with her part of the groceries. Mrs. Belden
702 claims that they did not ask for this money, implying that Stephanie either was required by her
703 parents to do it, or that she did it willingly. Mr. and Mrs. Long told the committee Stephanie
704 actually wanted to help contribute.

705 Regarding the imprisonment claim more generally, Mrs. Belden communicated this:
706
707 Where we lived, being an old 1900 farmhouse in the country, we didn’t have a typical lock on our
708 door. It was old with a ‘skeleton key.’ We just left it unlocked almost all the time. Stephanie came
709 and went as she pleased. She would go on walks, walk down to her friends (another family in our
710 church), even ride a bicycle and drove a neighbor’s golf cart (which we couldn’t understand since
711 she still claimed to us to be blind). She’d go over to other people’s homes from church without us.
712 She had access to our home phone with unlimited long distance, which I know she used to at least
713 call family. She had access to my laptop and my desktop and to the internet. She had access to
714 neighbors. She wrote letters to out-of-state family and friends, and they wrote back. My kids and
715 others could all attest to these things.
716

717 Mrs. Belden recalled that during Stephanie’s time with them, Stephanie regularly communicated
718 privately over the phone with her counselor Ms. Polly Yarling, which would have given her
719 ample opportunity to report being imprisoned and sexually abused (it also shows she had access
720 to a phone). Furthermore, based on her extensive calendar records from that time, Mrs. Belden
721 explained that she transported Stephanie to medical appointments multiple times per month.
722 According to her, there were times when Stephanie asked her to stay with her for the
723 appointment, and other times when Mrs. Belden was absent. It seems plausible to the committee
724 that Stephanie could have asked for help during any of these private medical visits while in NC,
725 if they occurred as Mrs. Belden testified.

726 Much of the foregoing is testimony without definitive objective evidence. For that reason,
727 the committee simply presents these two sharply differing accounts for the reader to consider and

728 weigh. However, the sample of communications is clearer. Unless the record of correspondence
729 has been completely fabricated, it is very difficult to understand how Stephanie could have
730 carried on this kind of communication over this length of time if she had been both imprisoned
731 and sexually molested in the Belden home. The committee concludes that Stephanie was either
732 feigning love for the Beldens in these messages, not to mention the Beldens feigning love for her
733 (Communication 7, lines 683–691), or she is currently misrepresenting what her experience was
734 like in the Belden home.

735

736 **D. Allegations of Ecclesiastical Misconduct**

737

738 **1. The Doctrine of the Session of Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church**

739

740 In the SoP episode, Mrs. Chernyavskiy spoke at some length about how deeply immersed
741 NRPC and the Long household was in Federal Vision theology. Mr. Bell and Mrs. Chernyavskiy
742 had the following dialogue:

743

744 **Peter Bell:** “When you were growing up in the OPC, and you had the Canon Press and Federal
745 Vision stuff, was this before or after the Federal Vision statement put out by the OPC? I think that
746 was ‘04 when the statement came out.”

747 **Stephanie Chernyavskiy:** I believe this would have been before that.

748 **Peter Bell:** Okay.

749 **Stephanie Chernyavskiy:** I was born in ‘92, so I think that was, yeah, that would have been
750 before that.

751 **Peter Bell:** Okay. Did it change much?

752 **Stephanie Chernyavskiy:** It was like ‘99, 2000.

753 **Peter Bell:** Okay. Would it have changed at all or did you notice any change? I mean, you
754 wouldn’t have known probably about the Federal Vision statement, but did it change at all after
755 that?

756 **Stephanie Chernyavskiy:** I actually did know. It actually became much worse. It was almost a
757 whiplash reaction of, we’re going to do this even harder... We can’t let our minds be changed or
758 what was that thing? Tossed by every wind and whim kind of thing.

759

760 Mr. Bell was referring to the OPC’s *Report on Justification*, presented in 2004 to the 73rd
761 General Assembly. Mrs. Chernyavskiy clearly alleged that when this report was published, either
762 the Long household, or the NRPC session, or both, essentially doubled down on Federal Vision
763 commitments.

764 There are two weighty points of information that refute this allegation. First, on June 21,
765 2007, while serving as the overseeing body for NRPC, the session of Providence Presbyterian
766 Church (OPC), Chilhowie, VA adopted a document they drafted that contained conclusions and
767 resolutions repudiating Federal Vision theology. The first two signatories on the document were
768 Rev. Hank Belfield, who serves to this day on the NRPC provisional session, and Rev. Belden,
769 who then served as the organizing pastor.³⁰

³⁰ See Appendix 6. The conclusion stated, “THEREFORE, we the undersigned members of the session of Providence Presbyterian Church of Chilhowie, Virginia, hereby resolve that the erroneous teachings and resulting erroneous practices of the New Perspective(s) on Paul and the Federal Vision/Auburn Avenue Theology movements will not be taught or promoted within our jurisdiction over the local church. Rather, we resolve to continue teaching and promoting the orthodox doctrines and practices of *the Westminster Confession of Faith* and *the Larger and*

770 The second significant point that refutes Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s claim is Rev. Bennett’s
771 ministry in the PCA before being called to NRPC. Rev. Bennett spent years combatting Federal
772 Vision theology in the Missouri Presbytery of the PCA. He even served as a co-prosecutor in
773 bringing theological charges against Jeff Meyers, then a well-known Federal Visionist in that
774 presbytery. One can scarcely imagine how a church that allegedly pursued Federal Vision
775 theology “even harder” would consider calling a man who had engaged in such ministerial labor,
776 let alone Rev. Bennett accepting a call to such a congregation. This allegation by Mrs.
777 Chernyavskiy is inarguably and demonstrably false.

778 2. The Discipline of the Session of Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church

779 a. First Discipline: May 27, 2009

780
781
782
783 In the SoP episode, Mrs. Chernyavskiy articulated her version of the events and reasons
784 leading up to her being ecclesiastically disciplined by the NRPC session on May 27, 2009. After
785 mentioning the abuse of her neighbor, she said:

786
787 And there were sexual assault exams that were performed by a doctor, but against my will. I didn’t
788 want any part of that. They decided that we were sexually immoral and that we had encouraged our
789 siblings to lie. And the church, they say in the records that we came as our own accuser. We did
790 not come as our own accuser. We were forced to confess to those sins, but they weren’t sins because
791 we were minors and it was abuse. You don’t accuse a minor who’s been sexually abused of being
792 sexually immoral. And the abuse happened much earlier. Like we were age thirteen. This was not
793 a, “Oh, she just turned sixteen and this happened.” So we were forced to write very graphic
794 confession letters, which included anatomical explicit terms. Mine wasn’t specific enough at first
795 and I had to redo mine. And I remember sitting there with the elders, reading my confession letter
796 full of the details. I felt so dirty at such a young age. I felt absolutely disgusting to God and to them.
797 And that’s not of God. He says, “Let the little children come to me.” He doesn’t say, “Make them
798 pay for something that’s been done to them wrongly.”

799
800 The way Mrs. Chernyavskiy describes the basis for this discipline is crucial. This alleged order
801 of events was reiterated Rev. John Mahaffy in his interview with committee. He stated “When
802 you look at the timeline, the discipline case followed the exposure of the abuse and followed the
803 sexual abuse examinations of the girls.” According to the Longs and their records, this is an
804 inaccurate rendering of events.

805 The committee has already documented this timeline above (lines 343–362). Mr. and
806 Mrs. Long’s records show that Stephanie last met with Dr. Joseph Neumann on May 4, 2009.
807 According to the Longs, due to the nature of the sexual conduct they had discovered, Dr.
808 Neumann referred them to Ms. Polly Yarlning, since it was more appropriate for a woman to
809 interact with Stephanie and her sisters at that time. They first met with Ms. Yarlning on May 15,
810 2009. The discipline occurred May 27, 2009. The minutes of the NRPC session document that
811 Stephanie and her two adopted sisters came before them as their own accuser “confessing
812 scandalous sins of deception, sexual immorality, and encouraging siblings to sin.”³¹ The session

Shorter Catechisms as adopted by the OPC and as historically understood, which rightly contain the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures.

³¹ See Appendix 7, May 27, 2009 (called), Items 4-7, p. 17.

813 pronounced different censures, with Stephanie receiving an admonishment, the mildest censure
814 available to sessions in the OPC. At the time, the session judged that Stephanie was *least*
815 responsible for what they had discovered in the home, namely, the illicit online activity and the
816 sexual abuse of each other. By way of reminder, the Longs took the three girls to Appalachian
817 Regional Healthcare in Whitesburg, KY for sexual assault exams on June 9, 2009 in accordance
818 with the CPS referral. This resulted in positive findings of abuse. The neighbor was later charged
819 on July 30, 2009, as a result of the KSP investigation.

820 The members of the NRPC session deny forcing the sisters to write graphic confession
821 letters. In her conversation with committee representatives, Mrs. Cydney Scaggs recalled writing
822 down what she had done, but not in a graphic way. She explained that it was a confession of sin,
823 though she clarified that she only knew her own letter and did not read Stephanie's.

824 To reiterate, Mrs. Chernyavskiy said, "We were forced to confess to those sins, but they
825 weren't sins because we were minors and it was abuse. You don't accuse a minor who's been
826 sexually abused of being sexually immoral."³² This is true if taken in a vacuum. No elder worthy
827 of the name ought ever to dare to discipline simply *because* someone suffered sexual abuse. But
828 as this report has demonstrated, Stephanie and her sisters *were not disciplined for being sexually*
829 *abused*. They were disciplined for their sins of sexual immorality and deception, including sins
830 against each other. If what the Longs say is true, the knowledge obtained through the painful
831 process of discovery led to ecclesiastical discipline for their sin. It also means that along with the
832 ecclesiastical discipline, more information was discovered, eventually leading to the criminal
833 indictment of the neighbor and her being sentenced. The committee strongly objects to Mrs.
834 Chernyavskiy's claim that she was disciplined *for being* sexually abused.

835

836 **b. Second Discipline: 2015**

837

838 Before reviewing Mrs. Chernyavskiy's allegations related to the second formal discipline
839 exercised by the NRPC session in 2015, the committee must first address allegations she made
840 about the session's treatment of her immediately after her removal from the Center for the Blind
841 in November 2011. In the SoP episode, she stated the following:

842

843 Two days later, I was marched into church, and after evening worship, dad hauled me up by the
844 arm, up front to the sanctuary, and he said, "Okay, we're going to sit down and talk to the session,
845 and you're going to tell them what you've done." And I was seated in a ring of men, Jay Bennett,
846 Seth Long, my father, and Hank Belfield, who is a provisional elder from Chilhowee, Virginia.
847 And I was told that I had lost my worth as a woman because I had given away a gift that was not
848 mine to give, but a man's to take, my virginity. And I remember asking Jay, I said, "Does that mean
849 I have no worth to God at all?" And he said, "Nope."

850

851 A review of the NRPC minutes does not show that this was a recorded meeting, which is indeed
852 possible since sessions occasionally meet with people informally without recording minutes.
853 This alleged meeting would have occurred on November 6, 2011. Rev. Belfield stated that he
854 was in Chilhowie that evening, approximately two hours away. Since he serves on the
855 provisional session, he was not permanently in Neon. Additionally, Rev. Belfield recalls having

³² In her statement to the committee, Mrs. Chernyavskiy said this about the first discipline, "This is heinous. None of us deserved that discipline. We needed to heal. Children are incapable of consent let alone sins of "sexual immorality" when the reality was that they were being forced and abused by a pedophile! I promised my sister I would expose this. And I will never stop fighting to expose it."

856 a different conversation with Stephanie in which he sought to encourage her with the gospel. He
857 and the other members of the session vehemently deny saying she had lost her worth as a
858 woman. Rev. Bennett also denies responding to Stephanie as she described.

859 In an email on December 12, 2011, sent to Rev. Belfield by Stephanie through Mrs.
860 Belden, she wrote the following:

861 Dear Pastor Hank,
862

863 I have thought a lot about the conversation we had before I left. I understand that I have been living
864 in sin and I am very sorry for this and am willing to repent and turn the opposite way. I am willing
865 to break off my engagement to Ilya Chernyavskiy and I am very sorry for my rebellion,
866 disobedience, lying, and adultery. I understand that I have hurt my family and friends and especially
867 God by my sinfulness. I understand that our confession says Catholics are not Christians and so if
868 I marry a Catholic I would be unequally yoked. I want to apologize for the way I rebelled even
869 against your advice when you said [*sic*] that I should listen to God's Word and my parents. I
870 appreciate that you shared your own story with me and I am very sorry for the way that I rejected
871 what you said."
872

873 After some more reflections on the seventh commandment, she concluded the email writing,
874 "Please forgive me for rebelling against you and for not listening to your rebuke and wisdom,
875 Sincerely, Stephanie Long." The committee reminds the reader that the allegation and
876 conversation just described occurred in 2011 and that Stephanie was not ecclesiastically
877 disciplined for her sexual relationship with Mr. Chernyavskiy at that time.

878 At this point, a few words to clarify the chronology will prove helpful before examining
879 this final allegation. The discipline described in the previous section occurred in May 2009.
880 Stephanie eventually enrolled in the Center for the Blind in 2011. Upon her removal from that
881 institution in November of that year, she was in the Belden home until June 2012. After
882 professing her faith in Christ at Trinity OPC, Wilmington, NC on June 17 or 24, 2012, she
883 returned to the Long home in Kentucky.³³ During this time Stephanie became engaged but ended
884 that engagement when, in her words, she escaped with Mr. Chernyavskiy on February 16, 2015.

885 Later in the SoP podcast, Mrs. Chernyavskiy described the actions of the session
886 following her departure:
887

888 And that also was the start of severe harassment and spiritual abuse from Jay Bennett and the
889 Church. I considered a cease and desist letter. They began a process of church discipline, citing that
890 I had come as my own accuser, which I did not. They had hounded me...tried to coerce me into
891 coming home, to meet with them face to face, and I was told I would not have an advocate person
892 there, it would be just me and them, and I...refused. Because I was absolutely terrified, that, if I
893 went, I would disappear again, and for quite possibly forever. I was censured, indefinite suspension
894 from the Lord's Table. They began to make up false sins, because I didn't have, you know, really
895 anything to repent of. I'm allowed to escape imprisonment, but they called it absconding. Finally,
896 I was excommunicated. Every letter they sent to me, I would have been allowed to appeal. But
897 every letter was sent either well outside the timeframe for appeal, which is ten days. Some of them
898 were sent a month and a half later. There were nights that I didn't want to live because of the
899

³³ Mrs. Chernyavskiy stated that she professed her faith on June 17, 2012, but Mrs. Belden's calendar records demonstrate that it was June 24, 2012, with the Longs then traveling home that day. In the committee's judgment, the date discrepancy is not significant, but we felt we needed to note this for the record.

900 spiritual abuse that was heaped upon the already physical abuse that I was dealing with from the
901 ex-fiancé. I went through thyroid cancer alone. And I have never seen in another church setting. A
902 similar level of cruelty when there should have only been healing, and there should have only been
903 a refuge.
904

905 To summarize, Mrs. Chernyavskiy alleges the session harassed and spiritually abused her,
906 erroneously designated her as coming as her own accuser, made up sins because she had nothing
907 to repent of, denied her the right of appeal after proposing censure, and treated her with singular
908 cruelty.

909 The minutes of NRPC briefly document the session’s attempt to contact Stephanie after
910 she left with Mr. Chernyavskiy. On March 18, 2015, the session passed the following motion,
911 “On motion, the session appointed Rev. Bennett to compose a letter formally asking Stephanie
912 Long to meet with the session at its next stated meeting at Neon Reformed Church. Notation: An
913 update was given regarding Stephanie Long's situation, the session determined to pray for her
914 and revisit the circumstances at the next session meeting.”³⁴ The committee has no record of any
915 correspondence between the session and Stephanie until May of 2015.

916 Rev. Bennett provided a record of his communication with Stephanie beginning May 12,
917 2015.³⁵ On that day, he requested that she speak with the session over the phone on Friday, May
918 15. On May 13 she agreed to meet, but with a qualification. The minutes document that she met
919 with the session and designates this as “coming as her own accuser,” which is technical,
920 disciplinary language from the OPC’s Book of Church Order (BCO), specifically the *Book of*
921 *Discipline* (BD), chapter V.³⁶ As a result, the session proposed the censures of rebuke and
922 indefinite suspension from the privileges of membership for the sins of “resuming a relationship
923 with Ilya Chernyavskiy, a member of the Roman Catholic Church, against the counsel of her
924 parents and her session (5th commandment), lying (9th commandment) and cohabiting with Ilya
925 Chernyavskiy (7th commandment).” They later cited BD VII, the chapter on appeals.³⁷

926 Rev. Bennett communicated the actions of the session to Stephanie on May 19, 2015,
927 including specific calls for repentance and an explanation of her right to appeal. The
928 correspondence between them continued over the next two months and included interactions
929 about repentance, appeals, and the Roman Catholic Church. On July 6, 2015, Stephanie
930 requested to be removed from NRPC’s membership and stated her intention to join St. Louis
931 Bertrand of the Roman Catholic Church. Rev. Bennett informed her that the session would
932 consider this request at their next stated meeting. The session pronounced the censures of rebuke
933 and indefinite suspension on July 19, 2015. The date on the letterhead sent by Rev. Bennett to
934 communicate this action was incorrect, reading May 19, 2015.³⁸ Rev. Bennett emailed this letter

³⁴ See Appendix 7, March 18, 2015, Item 8, p. 102.

³⁵See Appendix 8 for a record of the most relevant portions of this correspondence. The committee was able to read through the private correspondence between Stephanie and Rev. Bennett but determined not to include it as an appendix due to its length. It is available in the Supplemental Information Folder.

³⁶ See Appendix 7, May 15, 2015, item 6, p. 104.

³⁷ For those unfamiliar with the language of the OPC’s *Book of Discipline*, there is an important distinction between *proposing* a censure and *pronouncing*. The opportunity for appeal occurs after the court proposes a censure.

³⁸The metadata of the original PDF shows the document was created on July 21, 2015. See Appendix 8, page 8.

935 to Stephanie on July 21, 2015, and informed her of it through private messenger. The session
936 considered Stephanie’s request to be removed from NRPC’s membership roll at their meeting on
937 July 22, 2015, and determined not to remove her. The elders directed Rev. Bennett to continue
938 seeking to dissuade her from her desire to join the Roman Catholic Church. On August 8, 2015,
939 Rev. Bennett sent a letter, dated July 31, 2015, seeking to dissuade her from her decision. The
940 two corresponded and debated over email from August 8–11, 2015. On September 16, 2015, the
941 NRPC session reviewed Stephanie’s indefinite suspension and determined to propose an increase
942 of censure to excommunication. Rev. Bennett informed Stephanie of this action and her right to
943 appeal in a letter dated September 25, 2015. This was sent to her on October 20, 2015. The
944 session pronounced the censure of excommunication on December 6, 2015, although the minutes
945 of the NRPC session do not indicate this specifically. Rev. Bennett communicated this action to
946 Stephanie on January 12, 2016.

947 Rev. Bennett furnished the committee with over fifty emails and nearly seventy pages
948 documenting his and the session’s response to Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s allegations and his private
949 conversations with her, respectively. Having read through all the referenced communications and
950 others that were not referenced, it did not appear to the committee that the NRPC session—and
951 specifically Rev. Bennett—harassed Stephanie. While at times they disagreed sharply, there is
952 no record that she even asked Rev. Bennett to stop contacting her. In fact, on several occasions
953 she contacted him with questions or to ask for advice. The committee believes the NRPC session
954 failed to explain to Stephanie adequately the meaning and nature of coming as her own accuser
955 (more below). Additionally, the minutes are not altogether clear concerning precisely *when* the
956 session pronounced these very serious censures. However, Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s allegation that
957 the session “began to make up false sins, because I didn’t have, you know, really anything to
958 repent of” is not true. They clearly communicated the sins for which she was being censured and
959 the specifics of what true repentance would look like. In fact, Stephanie acknowledged her sin *in*
960 *every way except* her desire to marry a Roman Catholic. In a message to Rev. Bennett on May
961 19, 2015, she wrote, “I am willing to and have already started writing letters of apology seeking
962 forgiveness I am unwilling to break off my relationship with Ilya and it is my intention to marry
963 him” (see also the letter above, page 12, footnote 16). She was not denied the right of appeal, but
964 had it carefully explained to her throughout her discipline.³⁹ Furthermore, although the records
965 are not entirely clear, the session waited *far longer* than the BD required them to wait between
966 proposing censure and pronouncing it. Even if this was done inadvertently, it would have
967 provided *more time to appeal*, not less. Finally, while calls to repentance can be painful to hear,
968 and while some of the communication between Rev. Bennett and Stephanie was tense, the
969 committee disagrees that the session treated Stephanie with cruelty, especially considering her
970 later repentance and restoration, to which this report now turns.

971 Notably absent from Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s public testimony is the fact that she repented
972 and was restored to fellowship with the church on January 30, 2018. She eventually joined a
973 PCA congregation in Louisville by letter of transfer from NRPC, demonstrating that she was a
974 communicant member in good standing and in full fellowship with the church. The length of this

³⁹ In fact, she wrote on November 3, 2015, she wrote, “I am not [*sic*] writing this not as an appeal but rather an update on the facts of my situation. Ilya and I are not settled on St [*sic*] Louis Bertrand as a home church. Having been excommunicated from the church I am not sure as to whether or not I want to become Catholic or join a baptist/Methodist church here in Louisville. Several of his family attend a baptist church (including his mother). We have two seperate [*sic*] apartments that we sleep/shower in but I do the cooking and cleaning for both of us and we have our meals together.” Appendix 8, page 20.

975 report prohibits a longer account of this joyful occasion, but in 2016, Mrs. Chernyavskiy began
976 corresponding again with Rev. Bennett. This included inquiring about her parents. On November
977 22, 2016, she asked Rev. Bennett, “Now that Ilya and I have been married before God and his
978 church by an ordained minister, what else can I/we do to be reconciled with the church and my
979 family?” On December 6, 2016, she wrote this to him:

980
981 I want to be reconciled with you and the church because I feel like the Bible commands me to be.
982 I want to be reconciled with the folks at NRPC in order to exhibit my sincere repentance and hope
983 for forgiveness. I have made peace with myself and God and Ilya and his family and the priest and
984 St frances [*sic*] of Rome. However I feel that I should do everything in my power to also reconcile
985 with NRPC and my family. I understand that the relationship will never be the same and that trust
986 is out of the question. That is not what I am seeking. I am seeking to make peace and prove a spirit
987 of penitence.

988
989 She requested help from Rev. Bennett when she began seeking to attend a local PCA. She asked
990 for his opinion on the following mail, dated February 9, 2017 (all formatting and spelling
991 original), which she hoped to send to the leadership of this new church:

992
993 My name is Stephanie Chernyavksiy and I am writing to inquire about opportunities to attend
994 Redeemer PCA. I come from a presbyterian background (Formerly a member of Neon Reformed
995 Presbyterian Church) and actually attended Redeemer for a short stint back in 2011. Sadly I moved
996 away after making choices that were sinful and after an unwillingness to repent was
997 excommunicated from the church. I am married to a Roman Catholic and have been attending mass
998 with my husband but am seeking to attend a church where the true gospel is preached and where I
999 can be given oversight and leadership.

1000
1001 On November 11, 2017, she sent this message to Rev. Bennett:

1002
1003 Hi Pastor Jay I’m sorry to message you so late...at some point Ilya would like to have a conference
1004 call with the session also if you’d be willing to. He told me today that he realizes that his actions
1005 were wrong and even though he knew it was the wrong way to go about it he was desperate and
1006 ignored the fact that it was wrong. He wanted to express that he is sorry for not honoring my parents
1007 and for encouraging me to dishonor them. I know that he is catholic and that will always be an issue
1008 but he wanted to make right the things he can. He mentioned that in the last conference call we had
1009 that he said “desperate times call for desperate measures” and that even though he was desperate it
1010 was still very sinful. I just wanted to let you know and see if there might be an opportunity or a
1011 willingness from the session to have a conference call with us regarding that.

1012
1013 In the committee’s estimation, the total absence of any reference to this season of repentance, not
1014 to mention the reconciliation and restoration of the Chernyavskiy family with the Longs in the
1015 proceeding years, is a glaring and grievous omission. The NRPC session patiently encouraged
1016 Mrs. Chernyavskiy in her repentance and joyfully received her back into her fellowship. How
1017 could something so important be omitted from her public narrative?

1018 Without question, ecclesiastical discipline in general, and excommunication in particular,
1019 is sober, weighty, and very painful. Hebrews 12:11 says, “Now no chastening seems to be joyful
1020 for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness
1021 to those who have been trained by it.” Jesus Christ has given the keys of discipline to His Church
1022 for His honor, for her purity, and for the reclaiming of those who wander. By her own words and

1023 actions up until 2024, Mrs. Chernyavskiy demonstrated that she had been receptive and
1024 submissive to this discipline and had been graciously reclaimed from wandering. It appeared that
1025 the painful discipline bore good fruit, and those who knew her best rejoiced in it. The committee
1026 has not been able to conclude precisely why Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s current narrative differs so
1027 widely from the facts of the past.

1028

1029 **IV. Assessment of the Involvement of Others**

1030

1031 **A. Ms. Eileen Scipione**

1032

1033 In her interview with the committee, Ms. Scipione said she first heard about Mrs.
1034 Chernyavskiy through her good friend Mrs. Elaine Hofland, the wife of Rev. Fred Hofland
1035 (former pastor of Trinity OPC, Wilmington). Ms. Scipione explained that since she had
1036 developed an interest in victims of abuse in the church setting, Mrs. Hofland informed her of the
1037 situation. Though the timeline is not entirely clear, at some point, Mrs. Chernyavskiy asked if
1038 Ms. Scipione would be her biblical counselor.⁴⁰ Ms. Scipione accompanied Mrs. Chernyavskiy
1039 when she filed a criminal complaint against Mr. and Mrs. Long on October 12, 2024, with the
1040 Kentucky State Police. She also presented her lecture (referenced multiple times above) at
1041 Providence Reformed Church (RPCNA, Carnegie, PA) on October 30, 2024, in which she shared
1042 her account of Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s story. The committee learned during Ms. Scipione’s
1043 interview that she attempted to file ecclesiastical charges against Rev. Jay Bennett on March 6,
1044 2025, though it appears these charges were either never sent or never received by the clerk of
1045 presbytery.

1046 The committee highlights several key issues as it relates to the involvement of Ms.
1047 Scipione. The first is her stated interest in and apparent use of repressed memory therapy—or
1048 some version of it—with Mrs. Chernyavskiy. In her lecture, after discussing how carefully a
1049 counselor must avoid promoting false allegations or “suggest any details to someone who’s
1050 disclosing that they might have been abused,” Ms. Scipione stated this:

1051

1052 ...So I wait for someone to disclose because we must reveal true memories and not create false
1053 memories. So I also try to educate my counselees about dissociation, as we’ve talked about, but
1054 when they ask why they dissociate, “why do I blank out for these long periods of time,” I’ll say
1055 something like the following—elders would learn to do this too—um, that there is some explanation
1056 for why you dissociate to the extent that you do, but it looks as though you’ve been dissociating for
1057 many years. You’ve been blocking this for many years, so I don’t think there needs to be a big rush
1058 to figure it all out. Now let’s wait for the Lord. I believe that if you sincerely bring that question
1059 before the Lord in prayer, He will reveal to you, in His time and in His way, what actually happened.
1060 And until that time, let’s look at how we can get you the point of functioning better today and walk
1061 in faith and joy. So that’s what we do with trying to retrieve memories, true memories.

1062

1063 Approximately one minute later in the lecture, after defining the term “victim,” Ms. Scipione
1064 begins delivering Mrs. Chernyavskiy story.

⁴⁰ As the committee interviewed Ms. Scipione, all parties were careful not to delve into content that would violate the confidence of counselor/counselee. Again, much of this information has been discussed in the public square.

1065 In her interview with the committee, she was asked, in general terms, how someone could
1066 ensure accuracy when dealing with repressed memories. She responded that a counselor must
1067 take copious notes to see if anything changes, and then added, “You do some homework too and
1068 do some investigation, and I did that with Stephanie. She had so much evidence.” When asked
1069 about whether all this evidence came to mind during their counseling sessions, Ms. Scipione
1070 explained that much of it came earlier during past conversations with Mrs. Hofland, saying “And
1071 then Alaine referred her to me, and then more came out.” She also said later, “I’ve had people
1072 that their stories didn’t check out and I realized part of it was true but for attention they added
1073 more and more and more. But that’s not Stephanie’s case at all. Obviously, that’s my opinion.”
1074 She later clarified that it is possible that she is wrong, and that to claim otherwise would be
1075 arrogant.⁴¹

1076 The second key issue is Ms. Scipione’s conduct with Mrs. Chernyavskiy while she filed
1077 her criminal complaint. Undoubtedly, Mrs. Chernyavskiy has the right not only to notify law
1078 enforcement if she had been the victim of alleged criminal conduct, but also to have an advocate
1079 accompany her for that purpose. Yet as the committee listened to the interview between Mrs.
1080 Chernyavskiy, Ms. Scipione, and KSP Officer Nichols, we were surprised at how frequently both
1081 women referred to the OPC as a cult. For example, during the intake interview, Ms. Scipione
1082 interjected and said, “It is important to notice that the place they took her was the former cult
1083 leader, John, John Belden, that was his home. John Belden used to be the minister of the cult that
1084 she was involved in.”⁴² Mrs. Chernyavskiy affirmed this as Ms. Scipione was speaking. Later
1085 Mrs. Chernyavskiy mentioned to the officer that there were pending ecclesiastical charges going
1086 through “cult court in the church.” To this Ms. Scipione replied, “Although they don’t have a
1087 section where they call it ‘this is how we deal with cults.’ They don’t use the word *cults*. They
1088 should! John hasn’t used the word cult yet.”⁴³ Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s evidence submission and
1089 hand-written notes include six different references to a cult.⁴⁴ For the committee’s assessment of
1090 this see below.

1091 At another point, after Mrs. Chernyavskiy mentioned the pregnancy test (see lines
1092 658–660 and 696–699), Ms. Scipione commented, “It is so interesting that sex traffickers want
1093 to make sure that you’re not pregnant from [whispering] *someone else*.” She then turned to the
1094 officer and said, “I’m sorry, I’m a counselor for a long time, I need to—but just the power and
1095 control does make me—like they own something, like they own you.” Mrs. Chernyavskiy then
1096 said, “Right.”⁴⁵ At one point when the officer left the room to get them water, Ms. Scipione tells
1097 Mrs. Chernyavskiy “This is the first time you’ve gotten to tell your story to somebody with

⁴¹ This was a different tone than what Ms. Scipione maintained in her October 30, 2024, lecture and the follow-up post, revised on November 15, 2024. See Appendix 2.

⁴²Recording, KYleNichols_202410121355_BWC2110614-0_edited_(transcode), 14:36-14:53. Both Mrs. Chernyavskiy and Ms. Scipione also referred to Trinity OPC, Wilmington, NC as a cult, 34:35-34:40. Ms. Scipione did qualify later, saying, “Well, they just think they’re the only perfect. But there are so many people in the OP that are not like that though. It’s just a small cult within the OP.” See 1:11:10-1:11:22.

⁴³ Ibid., 1:31:46-1:32:06. The committee presumes *John* refers to Rev. Mahaffy. Remarkably, Ms. Scipione later referred to Dr. Pipa himself as a cult, saying, “Though Pipa might be a cult,” 1:32:13-1:32:22.

⁴⁴ FOIA Packet 13-25-0146, pages 3, 4, 13, 16–18 in document.

⁴⁵ Recording, KYleNichols, 22:32-22:50.

1098 authority. Somebody is receiving your evidence. Nobody would, Jay wouldn't look at it, nobody
1099 would look at your evidence. They wouldn't hear your story. I'm so sorry."⁴⁶ The committee
1100 believes that these comments are representative of Ms. Scipione's conduct in the interview, but
1101 we have also made this entire interview available for anyone who would like to review it.
1102 Throughout the interview, Ms. Scipione would suggest and, it seemed to the committee, help
1103 recall certain allegations as Mrs. Chernyavskiy sought to articulate them. Again, this is not
1104 wrong in itself, but not only did this occur in the context of framing OPC churches as a *cult* to a
1105 law enforcement officer, it communicated some very serious allegations in a criminal complaint,
1106 some of which our investigation has demonstrated to be unprovable or entirely false.⁴⁷

1107 Regarding repressed memory therapy, even a very cursory search will reveal that this
1108 approach is hotly debated in the psychology/psychiatry disciplines. Although the committee is
1109 ignorant of most of the conversations between Ms. Scipione and Mrs. Chernyavskiy, we have
1110 grave concern over what role this method, or something akin to it, may have played in making
1111 these allegations public, and even in filing some of them in the form of a criminal complaint. The
1112 committee believes that Ms. Scipione is complicit in enabling Mrs. Chernyavskiy to take these
1113 actions without first ensuring the content was grounded in the truth.

1114 We found the manner in which she helped present the information to the KSP officer
1115 especially egregious. Both Mrs. Chernyavskiy and Ms. Scipione falsely described two OPC
1116 churches as *cults* and Mr. Long and Rev. Belden as *cult leaders*, and Dr. Pipa himself as a *cult*.
1117 This, along with Ms. Scipione's insinuation that Mrs. Chernyavskiy was sexually trafficked
1118 transgresses the very letter and spirit of the ninth commandment, which our standards say
1119 "requireth the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man, and of our own and our
1120 neighbor's good name, especially in witness-bearing."⁴⁸ While Ms. Scipione was not technically
1121 in court when she aided the filing of these allegations and made these insinuations, she was most
1122 certainly bearing false witness.

1123 The Lord regards this kind of conduct with extreme seriousness:

1124
1125 If a false witness rises against any man to testify against him of wrongdoing, then both men in the
1126 controversy shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges who serve in those days.
1127 And the judges shall make careful inquiry, and indeed, if the witness is a false witness, who has
1128 testified falsely against his brother, then you shall do to him as he thought to have done to his
1129 brother; so you shall put away the evil from among you. And those who remain shall hear and fear,
1130 and hereafter they shall not again commit such evil among you" (Deut. 19:16-20).

1131
1132 Depending on the classification, unlawful imprisonment in Kentucky carries the sentence from
1133 one to five years in prison; kidnapping can carry a sentence of ten to twenty years; human and
1134 sex trafficking is even more severe. We reiterate, it is lawful and just to file criminal charges, if
1135 necessary, but we maintain that doing so without taking reasonable steps to ensure the
1136 truthfulness of the charges is a grievous sin.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 28:06-24.

⁴⁷ The committee is concerned that the addition of the *cult aspect* increases the apparent severity of the crimes being alleged, especially in connection with trafficking and kidnapping, see Appendix 4.

⁴⁸ Mrs. Chernyavskiy deliberately connected human trafficking and being part of a cult in FOIA Packet 13-25-0146-78, page 13 in document.

1137 By her own admission, Ms. Scipione never had a conversation with either Seth or Sheryl
1138 Long. In the committee’s estimation, she did very little, if anything, to corroborate what Mrs.
1139 Chernyavskiy was saying. This is inexcusable conduct by someone who claims the position of
1140 counselor (see Recommendation 6).⁴⁹

1141
1142 **B. Ministers in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church**

1143
1144 **1. ██████████**

1145
1146 ██████████ met with representatives of the committee on July 25, 2025. His
1147 involvement with Mrs. Chernyavskiy began around September 2024, approximately three
1148 months before the SoP episode aired in December. He said that was involved in a private
1149 Facebook messaging group, and at that point his interaction consisted in a lot of listening, which
1150 he described in this way: “Whenever you get into any claim of abuse, you listen, you listen, you
1151 listen, you listen. That’s because—my approach is simply believe and verify. You have to
1152 engage the people, hear their story, what they say, and then how things go from there depends on
1153 verification and that’s a huge, massive task. So in a sense my involvement was very brief.” He
1154 made it very clear that he was not in favor of Mrs. Chernyavskiy taking this matter public
1155 because he believed it needed to be addressed first in the courts of the church. He said he was not
1156 involved in the matter being brought to the KSP and stated that he “dropped out” once the
1157 decision was made to go public via the SoP episode. Other than some public social media
1158 interaction, ██████████ other involvement came in the form of phone and in-person
1159 conversations with Rev. Bennett, which were admittedly tense, and some communication with
1160 Rev. Belfield. This latter interaction included a phone call and reviewing the excerpts of minutes
1161 from the NRPC session. Since he decided to end his involvement after the matter went public,
1162 ██████████ said he did not receive any further evidence.⁵⁰

1163 ██████████ stated that he believed Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s presentation was consistent,
1164 though he acknowledged he had not completed his verification process. When asked if he had
1165 ever contacted the Longs, he stated that he had not because he was not in charge of the
1166 “investigation” and that someone else was supposed to have that conversation. He declined to
1167 identify who that person was, citing the privacy of their conversation group. It is important to

⁴⁹ Although a feature in Ms. Scipione’s lecture and Facebook post, technically speaking the allegations against Dr. Pipa fall outside the committee’s mandate. That said, the frequent, unsubstantiated, and even downright false statements about Dr. Pipa in her lecture, and again in the interview with Mrs. Chernyavskiy with the KSP officer are serious (see lines 261–275, 1116, and fn. 43). The committee did not pursue the question of Ms. Scipione’s apparent animus against Dr. Pipa, but believes that her comments against him were slanderous.

⁵⁰ The committee felt it necessary to document that ██████████ and Rev. Bennett have very different recollections of this question of the possession of evidence. Rev. Bennett’s notes document that when he called Rev. ██████████ in early September 2024, Rev. Jerrell said that he possessed evidence that Rev. Bennett referred to Mrs. Chernyavskiy as an unreliable witness, but that he was unwilling to share it because it would undermine the counseling/advisory relationship Rev. ██████████ had established with Mrs. Chernyavskiy. Rev. ██████████ stated in the interview that he never possessed evidence, stating that he “dropped out of it before that...[before] I got all that ‘verification,’ you know, the evidence, to review. So at that point, I was—that sidelined me and then a conversation on it became moot because I didn’t have it. So I never turned it over to him.” When a representative of the committee followed up with Rev. ██████████ for clarification, he expressed a distinction between having *seen* the evidence and actually having the evidence in his possession and having a right to distribute it.

1168 document that after Ms. Scipione’s lecture was removed, Mrs. Chernyavskiy posted this on her
1169 Facebook account, “There are things that they do not want to come to light . . . it has been pulled
1170 from platforms and made private. Feel free to private message me if you want.” Although he
1171 later told the committee he did not recall doing so, Rev. ██████ responded, “Please make it
1172 available to me. Eileen Scipione is excellent on matters of abuse! Censorship of this sort is
1173 unhealthy. It does not improve the idea that people are willing to learn and submit to one
1174 another. Quick to listen is a lesson difficult to learn for some—listening is a wonderful gift of
1175 God, shows humility.” This post and the comment have since been deleted. Further assessment
1176 of Rev. ██████ involvement is below.

1177 1178 2. Rev. ██████

1179
1180 Rev. ██████ also met with representatives of the committee on July 25, 2025, though it
1181 was separate from Rev. ██████. He said the matters related to Mrs. Chernyavskiy also came to his
1182 attention around September 2024. He also was involved in the private Facebook messenger
1183 group that Rev. ██████ referenced above, though neither of them identified the other as members
1184 of this discussion.⁵¹ Like Rev. ██████ he informed the committee, “My response when
1185 allegations like this are raised is ‘believe and verify.’”

1186 Rev. ██████ informed the committee that Mrs. Chernyavskiy was concerned about the
1187 security of the evidence she possessed. He stored it for her on his computer and ensured it was
1188 backed up. He did not share that information with anyone. When asked if he had reviewed this
1189 evidence, he responded “I have looked at much of it. I haven't gone through it in a lot of detail,
1190 but I've looked at some of it very carefully and have at least looked at, I think, almost everything
1191 in it. I couldn't take an oath that I've looked thoroughly at everything.” He stated his greatest
1192 desire in assisting Mrs. Chernyavskiy was “to keep the concerns within the right bounds. Where
1193 matters come up between Christians, I think there’s a real place for—the primary place is for the
1194 church to deal with those. Now I want to qualify that Caesar has a legitimate role.” He also
1195 strongly discouraged Mrs. Chernyavskiy from going public with the allegations. At one point he
1196 pulled back from advising her, but then was willing to answer some questions again when
1197 contacted by Mrs. Chernyavskiy. In his words, his goal was “hopefully minimizing handling
1198 things in an unbiblical way. At least that was the direction of my efforts.”

1199 He communicated that he “did not give advice on going to the civil/criminal authorities”
1200 later clarifying that he ended up supporting that decision, though he did not encourage it. When
1201 the committee later listened to the interview between Ms. Scipione, Mrs. Chernyavskiy, and the
1202 KSP Officer, Ms. Scipione said:

1203
1204 You know what, ██████ who is one of the men in the church courts, said, “Make sure I tell
1205 the officer, that they consider your jurisdiction as vital and first in importance.” ██████
1206 these are two men in the OPC, this denomination, that are very concerned and very unhappy about
1207 what happened. So they are saying that, they just want you to know that even though they are going

⁵¹ The FOIA documentation obtained showed a messenger group consisting of Rev. ██████ Rev. ██████
Ms. Scipione, Mrs. Chernyavskiy, and Ms. Caroline McKuen, see FOIA Packet 13-25-0146-38, page 53 in
document. See also Secondary Evidence Folder, “Conversation with Eileen and Caroline McKuen” and “Dad admits
he took me to David Nahka [sic].”

1208 to deal with it in church courts, first it's criminal, first we go to the civil authorities. Because that's
1209 the accusation, churches think they can handle this by themselves..."⁵²

1210
1211 It is possible that Ms. Scipione misrepresented Rev. ██████'s words.

1212 Another important priority for Rev. ██████ was to ensure that necessary matters be
1213 addressed in the courts of the church. He alleged that Mrs. Chernyavskiy had been told that she
1214 had no standing in the presbytery to bring charges, and said, "I'm grieved that that is a reaction
1215 to an allegation that someone has been harmed. It comes across as shutting down and not
1216 listening. And so I would really hope for a better response. And that's one of the reasons I'm
1217 very thankful for you as a committee and for the fact that you asked to talk to me." When asked
1218 whether he ever contacted the Longs, he said he did not, especially once he was informed that
1219 the matter had been referred to the civil authorities for adjudication.

1221 3. Assessment: "Believe and Verify"

1222
1223 The committee commends both ██████ and ██████ for their desire to care for
1224 those who have suffered and we believe that their involvement in this situation is well-intended.
1225 We also concur with ██████'s desire to keep the concerns within the right bounds.
1226 Additionally, we affirm the right of both ██████ and ██████ to serve and advise as
1227 they see fit. However, the committee has great concern with the approach our brothers have
1228 summarized as "believe and verify."

1229 "Believe and verify" appears to be motivated by a good desire to hear the cries of the
1230 oppressed with compassion and to avoid dismissing them with skepticism or indifference. This
1231 desire is in keeping with the Scriptures, for "Whoever shuts his ears to the cry of the poor will
1232 also cry himself and not be heard" (Prov. 21:13, cf Ps. 72:12). Just as a wounded sheep does not
1233 need to clear an evidentiary bar to merit the sympathy of a shepherd, so also faithful shepherds
1234 must remember that a careless examination, however well-intended, may only compound the
1235 suffering of someone already hurting. However, to *believe* entails not simply to care but *to agree*.
1236 It moves beyond support to affirmation, taking the listener past gentle concern and into a
1237 premature endorsement. This is not a question of semantics, but of substance. "Believe and
1238 verify" may accurately summarize one available approach to hearing allegations, but it suffers
1239 from several serious deficiencies.⁵³

1240 First, "believe and verify" directly contradicts the wisdom of the Word of God. Proverbs
1241 18:17 says, "The first one to plead his cause seems right, until his neighbor comes and examines
1242 him." Since there is always the possibility of falsehood in this fallen world, one of the many
1243 implications of this passage includes the necessity of suspending judgment—or delay belief—
1244 *until* verification occurs. The mother of the contested baby in the days of Solomon was very
1245 thankful that the king did not believe first and then verify, but rather tested the testimony,
1246 verified what was true, and then believed the proper account (1 Kings 3:16-28). Noah Webster
1247 defines *believe* as "To credit upon the authority or testimony of another; to be persuaded of the

⁵²Recording, KYLeNichols_202410121355_BWC2110614-0_edited_(transcode), 1:30:40-1:32:00. Earlier, Ms. Scipione said, "There are people, just like ██████ and ██████ who are fighting to get rid of these, to expose this, so that the entire denomination isn't painted with that kind of a reputation." See 1:11:30-41 in the recording.

⁵³ For two examples of the deficiency of "believe and verify" in Rev. ██████'s involvement with Mrs. Chernyavskiy, see Appendix 9.

1248 truth of something upon the declaration of another, or upon evidence furnished by reasons,
1249 arguments, and deductions of the mind, or by other circumstances than personal knowledge.
1250 When we believe upon the authority of another, we always put confidence in his veracity.”⁵⁴ As
1251 introduced above, it seems to the committee that *believe and verify* is entirely backwards from
1252 what it ought to be, for “The simple believes every word, but the prudent considers well his
1253 steps” (Prov. 14:15).

1254 Second, it greatly complicates a righteous approach to handling accusations. How can
1255 one “be persuaded of the truth of something” without verifying whether it is actually true? This
1256 does not preclude listening carefully or considering soberly and sympathetically. However, a
1257 biblical approach to allegations calls the listener to forego an emotional or intellectual
1258 commitment to something until it has been demonstrated to be true. The Lord commanded this of
1259 His old covenant church, saying,

1260
1261 “If there is found among you, within any of your gates which the LORD your God gives you, a
1262 man or a woman who has been wicked in the sight of the LORD your God, in transgressing His
1263 covenant, who has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, either the sun or moon or any
1264 of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded, *and it is told you, and you hear of it, then you*
1265 *shall inquire diligently. And if it is indeed true and certain that such an abomination has been*
1266 *committed in Israel, then you shall bring out to your gates that man or woman who has committed*
1267 *that wicked thing, and shall stone to death that man or woman with stones”* (Deut. 17:2-5, cf 13:12-
1268 15, emphasis added).

1269
1270 Noting the if/then (protasis and apodosis), the reader will see that serious allegations were
1271 heard—*but not believed*—until they were verified by diligent inquiry.

1272 Third, in the case of ministers and elders, this approach violates our confessional
1273 standards, especially the exposition of God’s Law. Westminster Larger Catechism states that
1274 superiors must, “instruct, counsel, and admonish” inferiors, while “countenancing, commending,
1275 and rewarding such as do well; and discountenancing, reproving, and chastising such as do ill”
1276 (WLC 129). Furthermore, superiors must not participate in “counseling, encouraging, or favoring
1277 them in that which is evil.” The ninth commandment requires “a charitable esteem of our
1278 neighbors... defending their innocence; a ready receiving of a good report, and unwillingness to
1279 admit of an evil report, concerning them; discouraging talebearers, flatterers, and slanderers” and
1280 forbids “receiving and countenancing evil reports.” A failure to verify because of premature
1281 belief either transgresses these principles that unify the church or aids others in contributing to
1282 that disunity.

1283 Finally, and with that in mind, a failure here will only further divide the church of our Lord
1284 Jesus Christ. There are many claims about the infrequency of false abuse allegations, and a
1285 definitive answer to that debate is beyond the reach of this committee. Nevertheless, Christians
1286 are called to live with careful discernment, and a common commitment to this approach is vital if
1287 the church is to remain united under her Head, Jesus Christ, and upon the foundation of truth.
1288 “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many
1289 false prophets have gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1). Of course, this passage refers
1290 immediately to false prophets, but the principle applies to all things and people who claim the
1291 sacred mantle of truth. Failure to exercise great care on this issue will devastate Christ’s sheep

⁵⁴ Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828; 1st ed., San Francisco, CA: Foundation for American Christian Education, 1995), 1:21.

1292 and erode their confidence in God’s method of dealing with allegations of sin, namely, careful,
1293 righteous, Spirit-led, and Word-informed discernment. Failure to consider allegations in a
1294 righteous way will also create suspicion among Christ’s undershepherds, either while
1295 shepherding in difficult and complex situations, or even in their interactions with one another in
1296 this age of allegations.⁵⁵ “Believe and verify” falls woefully short of this standard and will only
1297 reap the whirlwind of its error.

1298

1299 **C. Ms. Caroline McKuen and the Presbyterian Advocacy Coalition (PAC)**

1300

1301 According to their [website](#), the PAC is “an alliance of domestic violence advocates and
1302 counselors who recognize the need for trained, trauma-informed advocacy work for abuse
1303 victims in Presbyterian churches.”⁵⁶ The organization was founded in 2024, with Ms. McKuen, a
1304 communicant member in the OPC, serving as the director. She and her organization are
1305 mentioned in this report because of her participation both privately and publicly in the matter of
1306 Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s allegations. While serving as an advocate for Mrs. Chernyavskiy, Ms.
1307 McKuen contacted Rev. Bennett on September 2, 2024, to initiate a process for Mrs.
1308 Chernyavskiy to seek redress and reconciliation for her grievances. In the following weeks, Ms.
1309 McKuen and Mrs. Chernyavskiy, apparently in consultation with Rev. ██████, also
1310 communicated in similar fashion with both the Longs and the Beldens. Ms. McKuen and the
1311 PAC have advocated consistently for Mrs. Chernyavskiy since that time on social media
1312 platforms. The PAC website has also published an [Open Letter from Eileen Scipione](#) and a
1313 [related article by Rev. ██████](#).⁵⁷ Due to the length of this report, the committee provides no
1314 assessment of this interaction, considering it sufficient simply to note it for the record.

1315

1316 **D. The Sons of Patriarchy Podcast**

1317

1318 As mentioned above, the December 19, 2024 podcast was the vehicle by which Mrs.
1319 Chernyavskiy made her allegations widely available to the public. The podcast itself has been
1320 controversial from its inception. For identical reasons as above, the committee simply notes this
1321 for the record, with two additional observations. First, the two principal figures in *Sons of*
1322 *Patriarchy* are Sarah Bader, [a professed atheist](#), and recently discredited host Peter Bell. Mr.
1323 Bell, despite being obviously disqualified from anything remotely related to spiritual leadership,

⁵⁵ John Calvin helpfully explained 1 Timothy 5:19 in his commentary, “This is a necessary remedy against the malice of men; for none are more liable to slanders and calumnies than godly teachers. Not only does it arise from the difficulty of their office, that sometimes they either sink under it, or stagger, or halt, or blunder, in consequence of which wicked men seize many occasions for finding fault with them; but there is this additional vexation, that, although they perform their duty correctly, so as not to commit any error whatever, they never escape a thousand censures. And this is the craftiness of Satan, to draw away the hearts of men from ministers, that instruction may gradually fall into contempt. Thus not only is wrong done to innocent persons, in having their reputation unjustly wounded, (which is exceedingly base in regard to those who hold so honorable a rank,) but the authority of the sacred doctrine of God is diminished.”

⁵⁶ <https://www.presbyterianadvocacycoalition.org/>.

⁵⁷ <https://www.presbyterianadvocacycoalition.org/blog-1/letter-from-eileen-scipione> and <https://www.presbyterianadvocacycoalition.org/blog-1/what-about-matthew-18>, respectively.

1324 continues to participate in this work.⁵⁸ Second, while God can use anyone to expose sin in His
1325 church, the committee believes that this podcast represents some of the most pointed examples of
1326 the danger of a “believe and verify” paradigm when it comes to addressing allegations of abuse.
1327

1328 V. Concluding Evaluations of the Committee 1329

1330 A. The Actions of the NRPC Session and its Members 1331

1332 Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s allegations against the NRPC session are summarized and partially
1333 answered above (lines 907–910, 949–972). It is necessary now to highlight the allegations that
1334 the committee believes have merit, which include the deficiency of the session’s minutes, the
1335 ambiguity over cases without full process (coming as one’s own accuser), and questions
1336 concerning the session’s communication with Mrs. Chernyavskiy.

1337 First, the minutes of the NRPC session do not adequately preserve the record of the
1338 circumstances of the discipline they administered to Mrs. Chernyavskiy and her sisters. Both
1339 Rev. Mahaffy and Rev. Jerrell mentioned this among their concerns when interviewed by the
1340 committee. When questioned concerning the sparsity of the minutes, the session stated that their
1341 desire was to be discreet in recording the details of the admittedly very sensitive and personal
1342 situations. They have admitted that, in retrospect, this was a mistake. The PSE’s most recent
1343 *Rules for the Keeping of Session Minutes* addresses this, requiring that when sessions administer
1344 discipline, “The minutes must provide sufficient detail for Presbytery to know who was
1345 disciplined, how, and why.” The NRPC minutes technically fulfill this requirement by recording
1346 the names, the censures, and the sins receiving censure, but beyond that there is very little to no
1347 additional information. The committee does not have a ready solution to this problem and
1348 suspects it is not unique to the NRPC session. While we do not believe that the session sought to
1349 be duplicitous or deceptive, the PSE needs to consider this carefully and assess whether its
1350 sessions’ records of disciplinary actions are adequate. The presbytery may need to consider
1351 addressing this in its *Rules for the Keeping of Session Minutes* (see Recommendation 2).⁵⁹

1352 Second, and closely related, the NRPC session has no record of their explanation of cases
1353 without full process (BD V). At two different times the session recorded that Stephanie came as
1354 her own accuser (2009 and 2015). She does not contest *that this occurred*, but vehemently
1355 challenges the propriety of this occurring. In the OPC the judicial process can be cumbersome
1356 and often confusing, especially for those unfamiliar with the *Book of Discipline*. Incidentally,
1357 one of the purposes for the founding of the Presbyterian Advocacy Coalition was to assist people

⁵⁸ Mr. Bell recently publicly admitted to nearly two decades of pornography addiction (though with some improvement), being separated from his wife during the recording of the first season of his podcast, being fired from jobs for lying, “and covering up other things, in rather large ways,” and being “kicked out” of ministry positions for lying. See <https://youtu.be/vzdIMsDq9g4?si=xwpupMtgjU2vCDiM&t=376>, <https://julieroys.com/after-challenging-doug-wilson-podcasters-confession-shakes-anti-patriarchy-movement/> or <https://baptistnews.com/article/in-fight-against-patriarchy-women-are-not-listened-to/>. Two other articles warning about the lack of Mr. Bell’s credibility were published by OPC minister Rev. Andrew Smyth which the reader can find on his blog at <https://www.onceforalldelivered.com/p/sons-of-charlatanry> and <https://www.onceforalldelivered.com/p/from-such-turn-away>.

⁵⁹ The committee recommends Scott M. Manetsch, *Calvin’s Company of Pastors: Pastoral Care and the Emerging of the Reformed Church, 1536–1609* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013), chapter 7, for an historical survey of how the churches in Geneva preserved the records of discipline in their ministry of moral oversight.

1358 through the disciplinary process. There is a pastoral and practical benefit to shepherding sheep
1359 who come contritely confessing their sins. When a member comes to their session in this way,
1360 they are essentially waiving their right to a trial, but not surrendering their rights altogether. They
1361 still maintain the right to appeal the censure or to complain about anything they believe was
1362 incorrect in the process. The committee believes that sessions must carefully and thoroughly
1363 explain this to anyone who is coming as his or her own accuser and document accordingly.
1364 Unfortunately, not only is there no record of this occurring in the NRPC session in either 2009 or
1365 2015, but the committee is also unaware of any uniform process in the OPC that would serve
1366 both to explain and to preserve the rights of those who come to their sessions in this manner. To
1367 be clear, in saying this *the committee does not believe the session violated Stephanie's rights in*
1368 *the censures that were pronounced.* However, we are concerned that she did not have adequate
1369 understanding of the disciplinary process as she was brought through it. At the very least, a more
1370 thorough explanation and record may have helped avoid such sharply differing narratives all this
1371 time after the discipline (sixteen and ten years later, respectively). Again, the committee has
1372 strong suspicion that this kind of deficiency is not unique to the NRPC session, and it is a
1373 problem that must be corrected (see Recommendation 1).

1374 Finally, the committee believes the communication between the NRPC session—Rev.
1375 Bennett specifically—and Mrs. Chernyavskiy warrants some comment. On the one hand, the
1376 committee was concerned about the volume of pastoral interaction and conversation of weighty
1377 matters that occurred over email and/or direct messaging. We believe that such weighty matters
1378 are best addressed face to face, or at the very least by a more direct method like phone
1379 conversation. On the other hand, the committee recognizes that following 2015, Mrs.
1380 Chernyavskiy was no longer present in Neon, and that much of the communication came at her
1381 initiative. Additionally, had these conversations not occurred in the manner that they did, the
1382 record of the discussion would not have been as clear to review. Considering the session more
1383 broadly, there were two untimely communications that the committee identified. Rev. Bennett
1384 notified Mrs. Chernyavskiy of the proposed increase of censure to excommunication on October
1385 20, 2015, with a letter dated September 25, 2015. He notified her of the pronounced censure of
1386 excommunication on January 12, 2016, over five weeks after it was pronounced December 6,
1387 2015. There is no written explanation for this delay, and something of such weight ought to have
1388 been communicated more promptly.

1389 Every session that has worked together for any length of time will survey the conduct of
1390 their shepherding and identify mistakes, errors, and areas of weakness. Complexities and
1391 difficulties do not excuse these failures, but they do supply context for them. With this said,
1392 although the NRPC session readily admits there are things they should have done better, on the
1393 whole, the committee does not believe their conduct was spiritually abusive. Critics of this report
1394 and its conclusions may object that the errors we have identified are substantially procedural and
1395 clerical. While this is true, it is important to remember that far from neglecting the weightier
1396 matters of the law in favor of procedure, the NRPC session sought to address grievous sin
1397 righteously, with mercy, and in faith that the Lord Jesus would bless (see Matt. 23:23). As
1398 outlined above, Mrs. Chernyavskiy repented of her sins, and, along with her husband, sought
1399 reconciliation with her family and church in 2018. The committee only wishes that she had
1400 continued in that trajectory which was bearing fruit in keeping with repentance.

1401
1402
1403

1404 **B. The Narrative of Mrs. Stephanie Chernyavskiy**
1405

1406 The committee entirely supports Mrs. Chernyavskiy in filing criminal charges or bringing
1407 a civil suit against those whom she believed had committed offenses against or otherwise harmed
1408 her. She in fact did file criminal charges, but they were dismissed for insufficient evidence.
1409 Regarding any matters in which she believes she has been wronged criminally or civilly, in the
1410 words of the clerk of Ephesus, “the courts are open and there are proconsuls. Let them bring
1411 charges against one another” (Acts 19:38). Those matters fall outside our reach as a committee of
1412 presbytery, and we encourage Mrs. Chernyavskiy, whose husband is an attorney, to avail herself
1413 of the rights she has as a citizen of her state and nation if she desires.

1414 Yet, after countless hours of reading, interviewing, discussing, reviewing documentation,
1415 and conferring as a committee, we are left with no option but to conclude that the narrative of
1416 Mrs. Chernyavskiy, whether intentional or not, is largely false. Aside from the sorrowful account
1417 of her birth mother and the neighbor’s criminal sexual abuse, the evidence does not support her
1418 most serious allegations. This became even more apparent after the committee carefully
1419 reviewed Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s additional allegations and supporting evidence she sent on
1420 September 20, 2025.⁶⁰ If one merely read Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s labels of her evidence, it would
1421 appear to support her narrative at every point. However, when one examines the actual files, the
1422 conclusion is vastly different. We include the following not to mock, but to demonstrate the
1423 outcome of verifying before believing in this case.

1424 A close examination of her evidence showed that a claim to forced labor is actually Rev.
1425 Bennett’s expression of gratitude for help in cleaning his home (#2)⁶¹; “fabricating sins” is a
1426 minister urging a member under discipline not to participate in Roman Catholic worship (#13);
1427 an “escape attempt” becomes a picture of Thanksgiving with the Belden family (#30B/#31C); a
1428 picture at the Mountain Arts Center is “proof” that she was guarded at all times; “Monitored via
1429 motion cameras. Always watched” is a picture of Stephanie helping her father carry a hunting
1430 stand in August 2014; and “whipping scars” are faint marks with no resemblance to ordinary
1431 scars.⁶² She accuses Rev. Bennett of heresy for using “absolve” in the context of restoration from
1432 excommunication, but this term occurs in the OPC’s form for “Readmission of an
1433 Excommunicated Person.” We reiterate: the evidence does not support the narrative. This is not
1434 simply the conclusion of a committee of presbytery, but also of her own sister. In her interview
1435 with the KSP detective who conducted the investigation of Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s criminal
1436 allegations, Mrs. Cydney Scaggs said, “But when it comes down to it, if you would take
1437 everything Stephanie said, go the complete opposite way with it, that would be your truth. And
1438 I’m not saying that to be on their [her parents’] side, or to be against Stephanie. I’m just saying

⁶⁰ The evidence files were all available to members of the PSE. The numbers that follow, for example #13, refer to information in the primary evidence folder as labeled by Mrs. Chernyavskiy. The secondary evidence folder contains information with her own labeling.

⁶¹ This accusation has been publicly repeated multiple times. However, such tangible expressions of care are common in OPC congregations, and the cleaning in question was the work of three of the Long daughters: Stephanie, Cydney, and one of the biological daughters. In the comments under Rev. Bennett’s Facebook post, Cydney joked that he could be “killed” by his wife if he messed up their work before she returned.

⁶²See Secondary Supporting Evidence folder provided to the Presbytery (available only to the PSE).

1439 that because that's the God honest truth."⁶³ The committee reminds the reader that Cydney was
1440 disciplined along with Stephanie in 2009, even receiving a more severe censure than her sister.

1441 By all accounts, Mrs. Chernyavskiy has faced many challenges in her life, most notably
1442 the horrific early years during which she suffered profoundly. It is beyond dispute that this has
1443 deeply affected her and has shaped her life in many ways. The same can be said about the awful,
1444 criminal sexual conduct of the former neighbor. To a man, each member of this committee has
1445 great compassion for Mrs. Chernyavskiy in how she has suffered at the hands of others. Also to a
1446 man, each member of this committee believes that true compassion cannot be severed from the
1447 truth. With the help of her "advisors," and arguably because of them, it appears that Mrs.
1448 Chernyavskiy has engaged in large-scale triangulation.⁶⁴ On one side of this equation are those
1449 closest to her whom she now calls her abusers. We speak of her parents who adopted her, taught
1450 her, protected her, provided for her, and loved her; and her former elders, who shepherded her,
1451 prayed for her, and even disciplined her with a hope to reclaim her. On the other side of this
1452 equation are those who believed her story, some even platforming it, without adequately
1453 verifying the facts. The common denominator, as far as the committee could find, was that *none*
1454 of her "advisors" attempted to hear the other side of the story. This formed an environment
1455 susceptible to distortion and deception, and in the committee's judgment, this is precisely what
1456 happened. We hasten to add that, even in this, we believe Mrs. Chernyavskiy is a victim.

1457 Mrs. Chernyavskiy is a victim of Ms. Scipione's poor counseling and apparent eagerness
1458 to develop a case against a church she believes to contain a cult and ministers she regards as cult
1459 leaders. She is a victim of being carelessly exposed and left to wrong and temptation by Rev.
1460 ██████████ and Rev. ██████████ who "believed" but did not verify. She is a victim of Peter Bell and the
1461 *Sons of Patriarchy* podcast, who profited from her "story," while hiding behind her embellished
1462 account of victimhood, shielding themselves from criticism in the process. We find this conduct,
1463 and other actions that we did not have space to document, highly problematic. Doubtless there
1464 will some who object to our conclusion. To them, the committee simply recommends a thorough,
1465 dispassionate examination of the evidence.

1466 At the beginning of this report, the committee stated its intention to tell "truth's story,"
1467 and we have labored to do so faithfully and without partiality (Lev. 19:15). True and genuine
1468 compassion does not lose sight of what is true, and a loving hold upon the truth will not tolerate
1469 supporting what is false. Truth and love are not enemies of compassion but pillars for it. The
1470 Lord Jesus loved the rich young ruler when He addressed the idol of his heart, even though it
1471 made that young man very sorrowful (Mark 10:21-22). As Christ's undershepherds, the NRPC
1472 session loved Stephanie when they told her the truth about her sin, urging her to repentance, and
1473 then shepherding her into restoration. The committee can attest that they are all heartbroken at
1474 this recent turn of events. Wise counselors will take this to heart, and it is our sincere hope that
1475 this report will help all those involved to seek the truth in love.

1476
1477
1478

⁶³ FOIA Interview, REDACTED 13-25-0146_ Cydney Scaggs(transcode), 26:52-27:10.

⁶⁴ "Triangulation in relationships refers to a communication pattern where one person avoids direct interaction with another, instead using a third person as an intermediary. This can create misunderstandings and conflicts, often serving as a manipulative strategy to control or gain power." See <https://www.simplypsychology.org/what-is-triangulation-in-psychology.html>

1479 **C. Conclusions**

1480

1481 The committee’s mandate was “to investigate allegations against Mr. Belfield, Mr.
1482 Bennett, Mr. Long, the PSE, and the OPC as a whole.” Here are the committee’s conclusions
1483 concerning each:

1484 **Rev. Hank Belfield:** There is no evidence that he spoke to Mrs. Chernyavskiy as she
1485 described (lines 845–851). There is clear evidence that he sought to comfort her with the gospel,
1486 for which she expressed her thanks (lines 861-874). We believe the allegations of heresy,
1487 spiritual abuse, and cruelty not only to be unfounded, but slanderous.

1488 **Rev. Jay Bennett:** The committee believes that Rev. Bennett should have been more
1489 prompt in his communications to Stephanie of the serious disciplinary actions by the NRPC
1490 session. Additionally, the degree to which he engaged in pastoral interaction via text and
1491 email/direct message was unwise in the committee’s judgment (though, see lines 1375–1382).
1492 We do not believe these errors rise to a level that would warrant a trial. There is no evidence that
1493 he referred to Mrs. Chernyavskiy as “an unreliable witness” in the context of her allegedly
1494 seeking to report sexual abuse (see letter on page 11-12, footnote 16). We believe the allegations
1495 of heresy, sexual abuse, harassment, spiritual abuse, and cruelty not only to be unfounded, but
1496 slanderous.

1497 **Mr. and Mrs. Long:** The committee regards the majority of the allegations against Mr.
1498 Long as also directed against Mrs. Long. This was only confirmed when Mrs. Chernyavskiy
1499 provided the committee with an additional twenty-five allegations against them on September
1500 20, 2025. They did remove Stephanie from the school. At best, they did this without her
1501 permission; at worst, it was against her will and desires. The committee addressed this in lines
1502 603–608. A more recent emphasis from Mrs. Chernyavskiy is that the Longs “hacked” into her
1503 emails and social media to monitor her activity. The committee understands the Longs had
1504 access to her email account from the time she was a minor, especially given the sordid events in
1505 and leading up to 2009 (see lines 343–353). We are ignorant of whether she clearly revoked that
1506 access when she became a legal adult. The Longs admit they accessed her emails, but it does not
1507 seem they “hacked” into them as alleged.⁶⁵ We simply cannot answer every allegation that Mrs.
1508 Chernyavskiy has made, but we refer you to our summaries and documentation above. However,
1509 the committee can say this: we have reviewed all of Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s allegations, and most
1510 are either unprovable or unfounded. Based on the extensive documentation the Longs shared
1511 with the committee, and especially the testimony of Mrs. Cydney Scaggs (Appendix 3), we
1512 believe the allegations of domestic abuse against the Longs to be unfounded. Additionally, the
1513 charges of false imprisonment were dismissed for insufficient evidence. The committee believes
1514 Mrs. Chernyavskiy needs to repent of the reproach she has heaped upon her parents, and we
1515 would humbly urge her to do so. Mr. and Mrs. Long rescued her out of total misery and have
1516 cared for her sacrificially. More than that, we believe they have meekly and quietly endured this
1517 season of allegations in a manner pleasing to the Lord.

1518 **Rev. Belden:** The committee found the “evidence” submitted for the allegation of sexual
1519 molestation remarkably insufficient and, and in lieu of anything of substance, believe the

⁶⁵ Since this was not addressed above, the committee notes that Mrs. Chernyavskiy claims that Mr. Long called her a whore. He did not do this, but rather rebuked Mr. Chernyavskiy in an email sent to him through Stephanie’s account, where he wrote, “...what kind of lying pervert takes advantage of a young blind girl treating her as his own personal whore?” See page 22 of the FOIA documentation for Mr. Chernyavskiy’s response.

1520 allegation is baseless. Furthermore, Stephanie’s own words and the extensive documentation
1521 from the Beldens disprove her allegations that she was imprisoned in the their home.

1522 **The PSE:** On multiple occasions over the last several years, the Presbytery of the
1523 Southeast has had to address serious allegations of sin. Each case requires that members of
1524 presbytery carefully, justly, and thoroughly consider the evidence before it. Only then can we
1525 rightly determine the truthfulness of the allegation or charge. Both sins and allegations of sin will
1526 continue until the coming of Jesus Christ. Until that time, the presbytery must continue to heed
1527 the advice it received from the Visitation Committee of the General Assembly in 2022–2023.
1528 The presbytery must do the righteous thing in a righteous way. At times, this will require passing
1529 just judgment against those known and loved among us. At other times it will require clearing
1530 and/or defending a brother’s name and reputation. The committee believes the function of this
1531 report serves the latter purpose. In all cases, it must be the truth and the fear of God that governs
1532 our judgment, not ecclesiastical pressure or cultural winds.

1533 As we “strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men” (Acts 24:16),
1534 not all will be happy with our conclusions or our decisions. Therefore, we encourage the
1535 presbytery with these words from J.C. Ryle:

1536
1537 Let all who are attacked by the world for trying to do good, take comfort in the thought that they
1538 are only drinking of the cup which Christ drank. Their Master in heaven sympathizes with them.
1539 Let them work on patiently, and believe that, if they are faithful, their work will speak for itself.
1540 The world’s opposition is sure to attend every really good work. If the servants of Christ are to
1541 cease from every movement which the world calls in question, they will soon come to an entire
1542 stand-still. If we are to wait till the world approves our plans, and is satisfied with the propriety of
1543 our efforts, we shall never do anything on earth.⁶⁶

1544
1545 Every member of the presbytery must take heed to himself, “Therefore let him who thinks he
1546 stands take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor. 10:12). Remember that the dragon is making war with the
1547 woman’s offspring, and that he is a crafty enemy, spewing the waters of deception, intimidation,
1548 and division toward the people of God (Rev. 12:15-17). Do not be surprised at the struggle. Long
1549 for better things. The old axiom remains true to this day, “Dost thou love controversy? Suspect
1550 thy charity. Dost thou abhor controversy? Suspect thy Christianity.”⁶⁷ We must not allow these
1551 controversies to diminish the needed tenderness of heart when shepherding Christ’s sheep. May
1552 he give us wisdom as we navigate the complexities of our age.

1553 **The OPC as a whole:** A consistent theme the committee encountered in the course of its
1554 work was the contention that the church is not equipped to handle allegations of abuse. We fully
1555 acknowledge and support the place that God has given the civil magistrate. Things rightly falling
1556 under its jurisdiction must be handled with their God-given authority. If the matter is legal,
1557 criminal, or strictly medical, it clearly falls outside the church’s spiritual nature and mandate. But
1558 if it is a question of morals, or of sin and righteousness, the committee simply asks who is better
1559 equipped than the church to address it? Disagreement on this point represents a significant,
1560 fundamental, and ideological divide exerting great pressure upon the church.

⁶⁶ John Charles Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on Luke: Volume 2* (1879; Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 2012), 238.

⁶⁷ William S. Plumer, “False Doctrines and False Teachers,” in *The Christian* (Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Publications, 1997), 13–14.

1561 The Scriptures say, “His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and
1562 godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue” (2 Pet. 1:3). The
1563 church is not ill-equipped to handle allegations of abuse that rightly fall under her purview. The
1564 committee’s great concern is that those most vocally antagonistic on this point are often
1565 embarrassed by the world’s opposition and conformed to the world’s opinions, contrary to the
1566 wisdom of God in Romans 12:1-2. Like other matters facing our denomination, it boils down to
1567 this pointed question: Is the Word of God sufficient? The committee believes it is, and it
1568 earnestly hopes that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as a whole will stand and persevere on
1569 this indestructible foundation, laid for us by our King and Head, Jesus Christ, to whom be glory
1570 and honor forever. Amen.

1571
1572 Respectfully Submitted,

1573
1574 Elder Mike Cloy (chairman)
1575 Elder Jeff Cunningham
1576 Rev. Tim Marinelli
1577 Rev. Mike Myers (secretary)
1578 Rev. David Vogel
1579

1580 **VI. Recommendations:** The following recommendations were approved by the Presbytery of
1581 the Southeast at its stated meeting on October 17, 2025.

- 1582
- 1583 1. That the Presbytery of the Southeast request the special committee of the General
1584 Assembly reviewing the *Form of Government* and *Book of Discipline* to consider how
1585 to advise sessions on cases without full process (BD V), and on the admissibility of
1586 charges filed by a non-member of the OPC in her courts (BD III.1).
1587
 - 1588 2. That the Presbytery of the Southeast ask the Committee on Leaves and Absences and
1589 Sessional Records to study methods that will best preserve sessional records, especially
1590 in judicial cases that address very sensitive matters, and to report back to the
1591 Presbytery.
1592
 - 1593 3. That the Presbytery of the Southeast send the Neon Investigation Committee report to
1594 the presbyteries of the OPC (including recommendations and appendices).
1595
 - 1596 4. That the Presbytery of the Southeast authorize its stated clerk to provide access only to
1597 the *FOIA Information* and *Other Documents* Folders upon request by a church court of
1598 the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.
1599
 - 1600 5. That the Presbytery of the Southeast send the Neon Investigation Committee report
1601 (including recommendations and appendices and access only to the *FOIA Information*
1602 and *Other Documents* Folders) to the following individuals: Mrs. Stephanie
1603 Chernyavskiy, Ms. Eileen Scipione, Rev. ██████████ Rev. John Belden, and Rev.
1604 Dr. Joseph Pipa.
1605

- 1606 6. That the Presbytery of the Southeast send the Neon Investigation Committee report
1607 (including recommendations and appendices and access only to the *FOIA Information*
1608 and *Other Documents* Folders) to the session of Ms. Eileen Scipione.
1609
1610 7. That the Presbytery of the Southeast send the Neon Investigation Committee report
1611 (including recommendations and appendices and access only to the *FOIA Information*
1612 and *Other Documents* Folders) to the session of Mrs. Stephanie Chernyavskiy.
1613
1614 8. That the Presbytery of the Southeast erect an *ad hoc* committee at the appointment of
1615 the moderator, consisting of four members of the presbytery, to either (i) verify
1616 reconciliation between estranged parties described in the report among members of the
1617 Presbytery of the Southeast, and Mr. ██████████ and Mr. Belden, or (ii) to seek
1618 reconciliation between such estranged parties among members of the Presbytery of the
1619 Southeast, and Mr. Belden, or (iii) to contemplate bringing a charge of an offense
1620 against Rev ██████████ (BD III.8.a).
1621
1622 9. That the Presbytery direct its clerk to append to the Neon Investigation Committee
1623 report sent to the Presbytery of the Northwest a letter of concern regarding Mr. ██████████
1624 ██████████ involvement in the matters addressed in the report, including the phrase “We
1625 have serious concerns about Mr. ██████████ involvement in these matters.”
1626
1627 10. That the Presbytery of the Southeast dissolve the committee with thanks.
1628

1629 **VII. Appendices**

- 1630 1. **Timeline of Key Events**
1631
1632 2. **Eileen Scipione’s Testimonial as of Nov. 15, 2024**
1633
1634 3. **Letter from Cydney Scaggs**
1635
1636 4. **Kentucky Statutes: Kidnapping, Human Trafficking, Unlawful Imprisonment**
1637
1638 5. **Grand Jury of Letcher Circuit Court: Report of No True Bill and Order of**
1639 **Dismissal**
1640
1641 6. **Conclusions and Resolutions of Providence OPC, Chilhowie, VA (Federal**
1642 **Vision)**
1643
1644 7. **Relevant Minutes from the NRPC Session**
1645
1646 8. **Record of Communications between NRPC Session and Mrs. Chernyavskiy**
1647
1648 9. **Examples of “Believe and Verify”**

Appendix 1

Timeline of Key Events

Important Notes

1. In the timeline below, Stephanie Chernyavskiy (née Long) will be referred to as “Stephanie” before her marriage to Ilya Chernyavskiy in 2016, and “Mrs. Chernyavskiy” subsequently.
2. These dates are based upon testimony and documentation the committee received from all parties involved. This timeline is consistent with the committee’s review of the evidence, and we believe it to be accurate, but we have not been able to verify every date with all involved.

1997	Seth and Sheryl Long adopt Stephanie around age five, after a foster placement with the Longs of roughly 2 ½ years.
1998	Seth and Sheryl Long adopt Tiffany.
1999	Seth and Sheryl Long have their first biological child.
2000	Seth and Sheryl Long adopt Cydney.
Aug. 6, 2004	John Belden is ordained by the Presbytery of the Southeast (PSE) and begins serving in Neon, KY. He does so as the Associate Pastor of Providence OPC, Chilhowie, VA (2004-2008) and then as an Evangelist of the PSE (2008-2010).
Spring 2009	The Longs discover evidence of sexual sin among their adopted daughters.
May 4, 2009	Stephanie, Tiffany, and Cydney meet with Dr. Joseph Neumann (PhD, Psychologist, Nouthetic Counselor) for the final time. He refers them to Ms. Polly Yarling (LCSW).
May 15, 2009	Stephanie, Tiffany, and Cydney begin meeting weekly with Ms. Yarling.
May 27, 2009	Stephanie, Tiffany, and Cydney are disciplined by the session of Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (NRPC) for “scandalous sins of deception, sexual immorality, and encouraging siblings to sin.”
June 9, 2009	Due to a referral from CPS, the Longs take the three adopted girls to Appalachian Regional Healthcare in Whitesburg, KY for sexual assault exams, which result in positive findings of abuse.
July 30, 2009	The Longs’ neighbor is charged with three counts of Sexual Abuse in the First Degree. She will be found guilty Aug. 25, 2010.
Feb. 2011	Beldens move to Wilmington, NC.

Appendix 1

- Summer 2011** Stephanie begins process in order to attend the Charles W. McDowell Center for the Blind in Louisville, KY at age 19.
- Nov. 2, 2011** The Longs attend an award ceremony at the Center for the Blind. While there they are notified by a staff member that Stephanie has been frequently leaving the Center with a man unknown to the Longs.
- Nov. 4, 2011** The Longs use the pretext of a family emergency to take Stephanie home from the Center.
- Nov. 13, 2011** The Longs take Stephanie to stay with John and Sara Belden in Wilmington, NC.
- Feb. 2012** Rev. Jay Bennett moves to Neon and begins full-time ministerial labors.
- June 2012** Rev. Jay Bennett is installed as the organizing pastor at NRPC.
- June 17/24, 2012** Stephanie makes a profession of faith at Trinity OPC in Wilmington and returns to Kentucky with her family.¹
- Fall 2013** Stephanie attends a singles conference at Machen Retreat Center.
- Aug. 2014** Stephanie becomes engaged to a man she met at the singles retreat, whom she would later accuse of sexual abuse.
- Jan. 10-14, 2015** Stephanie is admitted to a hospital in Pennsylvania while visiting her fiancé. She alleges this was due to sexual abuse, while the Longs state it was due to a preexisting medical condition.
- Feb. 16, 2015** Stephanie flees the Long home with Ilya Chernyavskiy, the man whose visits at the Center had alarmed her parents.
- May 19, 2015** On behalf of the NRPC session, Rev. Bennett informs Stephanie that the session has proposed the censures of rebuke and indefinite suspension for “resuming a relationship with Ilya Chernyavskiy, a member of the Roman Catholic Church, against the counsel of her parents and her session (5th commandment), lying (9th commandment) and cohabiting with Ilya Chernyavskiy (7th commandment).” Rev. Bennett includes information about complaint and appeal.

¹ Mrs. Chernyavskiy said this occurred June 17, 2012 on the *Sons of Patriarchy* podcast. Mrs. Belden’s notes, including a calendar she showed the committee from that time, shows the Longs present for the weekend of June 24, 2012 and taking her home that Sunday. The committee simply notes this discrepancy for the record.

Appendix 1

- July 6, 2015** Stephanie asks to be removed from the rolls of NRPC, stating her intention to join a Roman Catholic congregation.
- July 19, 2015** NRPC session pronounces censures of rebuke and indefinite suspension.
- July, 22 2015** During a stated meeting, the NRPC session considers Stephanie's request to be removed from membership.
- Aug. 8, 2015** Rev. Bennett sends a letter to Stephanie, seeking to dissuade her from her intention to join a Roman Catholic congregation.
- Sept. 16, 2015** NRPC session reviews and proposes to increase censure to excommunication.
- Oct. 20, 2015** On behalf of the NRPC Session, Rev. Bennett informs Stephanie of the proposed censure of excommunication with a letter dated Sept 25, 2015. He includes information about complaint and appeal.
- Dec. 6, 2015** The NRPC censure pronounces the censure of excommunication over Stephanie.
- Jan. 15, 2016** On behalf of the session, Rev. Bennett informs Stephanie of the pronouncement of the censure of excommunication.
- Oct. 29, 2016** Stephanie and Ilya Chernyavskiy are married.
- Nov. 22, 2016** Mrs. Chernyavskiy contacts Rev. Bennett and begins inquiring about the possibility of reconciliation with her family and NRPC.
- Jan. 30, 2018** Having demonstrated a life in keeping with repentance, Mrs. Chernyavskiy is restored to fellowship with NRPC.
- Sept. 9, 2018** Mrs. Chernyavskiy joins a PCA church in Louisville, KY by letter of transfer from NRPC.
- Sept. 2022** Mrs. Chernyavskiy gives two letters to her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Long. The first is a preface, while the second alleges serious sins of her former fiancé and errors on the part of the NRPC session.
- Aug. 17, 2024** Mrs. Chernyavskiy requests her complete membership records from NRPC.
- Sept. 2, 2024** Caroline McKuen of the Presbyterian Advocacy Coalition contacts Rev. Jay Bennett, seeking a meeting consisting of him, herself, and Mrs. Chernyavskiy. After initial email correspondence, Rev. Bennett ends communication with Ms. McKuen without a meeting and advises Mrs.

Appendix 1

Chernyavskiy that he would prefer to engage with Rev. [REDACTED] whom she had listed as her advisor.

- Sept. 4-6, 2024** Rev. Bennett and Rev. [REDACTED] have several conversations about Mrs. Chernyavskiy's concerns and evidence.
- Sept. 20, 2024** Rev. [REDACTED] calls Rev. Hank Belfield, clerk and member of the NRPC provisional session, to inform him that he and Rev. John Mahaffy (OPC minister in the Presbytery of the Northwest) are serving as spiritual advisors to Mrs. Chernyavskiy.
- Oct. 1, 2024** The NRPC session sends Mrs. Chernyavskiy's requested excerpts from the minutes documenting her membership.
- Oct. 3, 2024** Rev. Belfield receives a phone call from Rev. [REDACTED], informing him Mrs. Chernyavskiy recently reported her parents to a state abuse hotline and a police investigation is likely. Rev. [REDACTED] states ecclesiastical charges are also being considered.
- Oct. 12, 2024** Mrs. Chernyavskiy files a criminal complaint against Mr. and Mrs. Long with the Kentucky State Police. She is accompanied by Eileen Scipione.
- Oct. 30, 2024** Ms. Eileen Scipione delivers a lecture focused upon Mrs. Chernyavskiy's story at Providence Reformed Church (RPCNA, Carnegie, PA).
- Nov. 25, 2024** A KSP detective comes to Mr. Long's workplace as part of a criminal investigation, following up on the Oct 12 criminal complaint. Mr. and Mrs. Long, with their attorney Mr. Gene Smallwood, are later interviewed by the detective on Nov. 27, 2024.
- Dec. 13, 2024** Rev. [REDACTED] emails Rev. Belfield, with Rev. [REDACTED] copied, to inform him that he and Rev. [REDACTED] will no longer be advising Mrs. Chernyavskiy due her decision to conduct an interview with the *Sons of Patriarchy* podcast.
- Dec. 19, 2024** The *Sons of Patriarchy* podcast publishes an interview with Mrs. Chernyavskiy in which she accuses her parents and others of serious sins and crimes.
- Mar. 5, 2025** Rev. Dr. Will Wood sends a communication to the PSE, requesting the formation of an *ad hoc* committee to investigate the allegations published in the Dec. 19, 2024, *Sons of Patriarchy* episode.
- March 6, 2025** The session of Grace OPC, Lynchburg, VA sends a communication requesting the same *ad hoc* committee as Dr. Wood.

Appendix 1

- March 6, 2025** Ms. Scipione attempts to file ecclesiastical charges against Rev. Bennett, though these charges were either never sent or never received by the clerk of presbytery.
- April 4-5, 2025** The Presbytery of the Southeast forms this committee during its stated meeting and gives it the following mandate, “To investigate allegations against Mr. Belfield, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Long, the PSE, and the OPC as a whole, and to report back to the PSE no later than the October 17-18, 2025 stated meeting of the Presbytery with recommendations about whether and how the Presbytery ought to respond.”
- June 12, 2025** A Grand Jury in Letcher County, KY reports a “No True Bill and Order of Dismissal” for the charge of Unlawful Imprisonment against Mr. and Mrs. Long.

Appendix 2

Eileen Scipione's Testimonial as of Nov. 15, 2024

Note: Shortly after her October 30, 2024 lecture was taken down, Ms. Scipione posted an original version of this testimonial, which the committee possesses and has reviewed. She revised it on November 15, 2024, but has since deleted it. All formatting, grammar, and punctuation are original. The committee only changed the font and added this note.

Updated 11/15/24 with more evidence:

Exposed: Dr. Joseph Pipa Jr. and his followers:

I Timothy 5:1 instructs us to not be harsh with older men. Therefore I will only disclose what I know by first hand knowledge or second hand sources I trust.

As a counselor for many years of survivors of spiritual abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and verbal abuse I can be silent no more.

I know too much. I have witnessed too much.

And I am confident that what you will read on this post are not false allegations brought by Stephanie Long (maiden name). What I know are true allegations of actual oppression and abuse. I have seen the photographs. I've heard the testimonies. I've witnessed the damage first hand.

My late husband, George and I lived in Taylors, South Carolina and went to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church there. I saw this "leadership" style firsthand. Women working under Dr. P's leadership would confide in me. This wasn't gossip. It was a cry for help. Some of them knew I was a counselor for abuse victims that had suffered trauma.

What the most powerful men in that world of Greenville seminary may not want to admit was that I was witnessing spiritual abuse. We didn't use that term back then. Hopefully we will recognize it now because Jesus warned against "lording it over". Matthew 20:25-28.

I gave a lecture on Wednesday night, October 30 at a local Pittsburgh reformed church on how ordained officers can do a better job with abuse allegations. Within 12 hours the pastor received a thinly veiled threat of "liability of slander" so they took down my video from all four platforms. I don't blame them, not really. They've never faced this before, but I have faced this before. And I am not afraid. There's a fourth person in this furnace and He is with me.

What I believe brought on that threat from Jay Bennett, former pastor of an OPC church in Neon, KY, was because I named names. I named Dr. Joey Pipa Jr. publicly. In 2018 I tried to bring step 1 of Matthew 18 to him but he did not repent. He gave me a very dismissive and demeaning response. (Many scholars do not believe Matthew 18 applies to errant leaders, only to individuals. Therefore I should not be accused of not following the right procedure.)

In my video lecture on October 30 I explained how his leadership class taught at Greenville seminary for so many years, lacked wisdom and love. There wasn't much emphasis on how to listen to hurting women and children. But there was lots of emphasis on how to discipline them and punish them and control them until they bowed the knee to the authorities in their life.

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I submit that his imbalance resulted in many seminarians entering pulpits in the PSE with a distorted view of leadership. They didn't know how to recognize trauma from abuse. They learned how to use a hammer but rarely a scalpel. They had almost no idea how to read body language of a survivor of abuse. They couldn't comprehend why a woman wouldn't want to sit in front of an elder board, and tell all the details of the sexual shame she's been feeling for decades. Some of them dismissed feelings of any kind. Feelings were suspect.

Quote from his class: "A woman is not to teach men or exercise authority because of her susceptibility to deception.....God has not made her to exercise the kind of hard, judgmental discernment that is necessary in theological and scriptural issues. By nature, a woman will more likely fall prey to the subtleties of mental and theological error."

Dr P's students learned about excommunication. And judging from the way he advised Seth Long in dealing with his adopted daughter, who was suffering from Reactive Attachment Disorder, (having been almost starved and drowned by her biological mother), Seth Long applied the rod until it broke her spirit.

Dr. Pipa instructed them that "little hearts are very wicked and you cannot trust that they're truly sorry when they say so". Stephanie had to beg her mom to stop. Her mother would say that she didn't think she was "soft enough yet in her heart". A CPS worker took photographs of the strap that her parents ordered specifically so they could beat her as long as they wanted without breaking the skin. We also have the CPS report that uses the phrase "use of rod".

Stephanie's adopted father Seth Long is an elder in the Neon, Kentucky OPC Church. Their first pastor John Belden is the son-in-law of Dr. Pipa. Jay Bennet came as pastor after John Belden. Other elders may not have known about the level of abuse happening in the Long family.

I would not be surprised if all three of these men learned their harsh approach of leadership from Dr. Joey Pipa Jr..

Seth Long asked Dr. Pipa to counsel his rebellious daughter, Stephanie. He suggested 12 hours a day of a writing assignment using the Bible and the concordance looking up passages on obedience and rebellion. After two weeks somebody acquiesced and ended the torture. Stephanie has photographs. So please don't try to claim that I am gossiping, or that she is an unreliable witness.

Her father held the back of her hand over a woodstove very close to the heat. He said it was in order to teach her how "hot hell is". She has a photograph of the burn on her hand.

Stephanie's vision started to suffer. She eventually became blind from the stress. Its real. Look it up. It's called a conversion disorder. She eventually needed to learn braille and use a cane. It has taken nine years for her vision to return.

She lost a lot of weight because they wouldn't allow her to eat more than 1200 calories a day, following Dr.'s advice to make her "hunger for God". Dr. P's version of biblical counseling

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didn't involve listening with an open mind. My late husband, who taught biblical counseling at Dr. Pipa's seminary, did not teach him that version of biblical counseling. I assure you of that.

Stephanie's parents even stopped her violin lessons because they said she'd made it in idol by putting it before her relationship with God. They said she had hardened her heart against God by refusing to forgive her birth mother. This was the birth mother who had tried to drown her several times in a bucket of cold water and starved her so severely she needed three months in the ICU. No exaggeration: she obtained the hospital records.

At age 15 she and her two other adopted sisters were brought under church censure because of "sexual sin" with each other. It took her parents way too long to figure out that the 30-year-old neighbor lady had been molesting all three of them for years. At age 19, she was sent to Louisville, Kentucky to rehabilitation center for the blind. For the first time in her life, she met a young man who was safe, who listened to her. He looked at her evidence. She fell in love. He bought her a ring and wanted to marry her. Her parents ignored her pleas to even meet him. Seth Long decided this man was dangerous.

So Seth and Sheryl, with the knowledge of their pastor, Jay Bennett, and the former Pastor John Belden (son in law to Dr. P) concocted a plan to "rescue" poor deluded Stephanie from the Roman Catholic, Ilya from Uzbekistan. Not one of these ordained leaders ever bothered to learn anything about him. They would've found out that he was a patent lawyer and very kind and responsible. His faith was in Christ alone and not in saints or Mary. But following Dr. Joey Pipa's leadership style, they carried out their plan.

Her mother and father showed up unannounced at center for the blind, insisting to Stephanie that there was a "family emergency". Sheryl grabbed Stephanie by the arm, not allowing her to take her precious violin or any belongings, pulled her into the family van, locked the doors, took her purse and cell phone and snatched her cane away from her. They knew that would keep her from running away. But Seth and Sheryl don't want to call this kidnapping. They were just rescuing their daughter from a wicked person. They recently referred to it as an "intervention. "

So you ask, where did they take her? They took her to a remote place in North Carolina to the home of Dr.Pipa's' daughter and son-in-law. They knew she would be "safe" there. John and Sara charged her rent, at the same time requiring her to babysit and do most of the housework. Sara made the meals and Stephanie cleaned them up. They watched her like a hawk to make sure she could never get to their phone to call for help. She has photographs of this, so denial will not work. They held her prisoner for seven months.

Stephanie would be willing to testify in a court of law that while she was in the home of John and Sara Beldon, on many late nights on his way back from the bathroom, her host would stop by her bed and grope her above the waist. The terror was palpable. She remembered the man who entered the abandoned blue bus where she spent her first 20 months as a baby. Her alcoholic bio mother gave them free access to her. The only payment was a bottle of booze.

Another traumatic attack was when she was forced to take a pregnancy test in front of Sara Beldon with threats of physical assault from John Belden who'd been given permission to spank

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her if she refused. I suppose they wanted to make sure she was sexually pure. I'm pretty sure Sara didn't know what role her husband had in the sexual purity problem.

So you wonder how it ended? When she finally agreed to "repent" and join the church, her father drove her eight hours back to the remote holler they called home on that very same day. They had succeeded in breaking her spirit. Or so they thought.

But it didn't actually work. The Lord kept her very close to Him. For three more years, her parents kept her away from access to a telephone, even removing the phone in the living room to their bedroom. (She has photographs to prove this.)

Her father hacked into her emails and sent an email to Ilya calling her a "whore" (evidenced in email).

Believing in the courtship model, Seth found two different single men they thought would make a great husband for Stephanie. They may have figured it was better to marry than to burn. The first guy was dressed like the Amish and he lived in a shack with no electricity. The second one weighed 350 pounds and had a nasty porn habit that turned into sexual violence. Maybe we should interpret Paul's admonition to lust filled men that it is better to remain single than to sexually abuse a wife.

Even when she had to go to the ER room for the horrible damage this wonderful reformed guy their parents had found for her had inflicted upon her, she tried to show the doctors' report of all the damage done to her. Her pastor and elders said that she was an unreliable witness. She was so rebellious. They wouldn't look at the ER doctors report.

The good news is that one blizzardy day in Whitesburg, Kentucky, Stephanie's father and mother were out of the house at the same time. She found a cell phone without a monitoring app and called Ilya's phone number. She had been waiting for this moment for four years. With bated breath and her heart racing, She waited for him to answer.

Had he gotten married? Did he still care?

He answered her call. The moment he knew it was her, he said, "Where are you? I'm coming to get you." Her Fiance, her first love had waited faithfully for four years, not having any idea where she was or what happened to her. The facility for the blind was not able to tell him much. He just held on, hoping she would someday reach out to him.

But the abuse toward Stephanie got worse, before they finally gave up gaslighting her. Neon, KY session excommunicated her. And her father and pastor Jay called her all kind of names thinking she was co-habiting with Ilya.

He sent an email to all her relatives and friends claiming she had abandoned them all.

Hopefully the OPC minister who threatened the church that hosted my lecture on Wednesday night will realize he's wrong. My allegations were not unsubstantiated. This church that hosted me it's not liable for slander.

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What must be repented of and changed is this distorted, unbalanced, and unbiblical understanding of leadership. Some refer to it as hyper-patriarchy. It is causing much trauma and abuse among the most vulnerable. The Bible has a lot to say about protecting widows and orphans.

Dr. Pipa, Seth Long, Sheryl Long, John Belden, Jay Bennett: each of you need to repent and ask forgiveness of your victims.(church records would be strong evidence)

APPENDIX 3

my name is Cydney Scaggs. I am one of Stephanie's ^{younger} siblings. I am the third child adopted by Seth and Sheryl Long. As Stephanie's sister I want to debunk some of the statements she has made to the public and our parents. I want to start by saying I've listened to both the ~~Pod~~ of Patriarchy and Scott Lark's ePod casts. When listening to these Pod casts I found very little truth in everything Stephanie said and talked about while "telling her story". The accusations made against our parents are horrible and very serious. I want to take the time to expose ~~some~~ of the lies that Stephanie has made up. The first lie I want to debunk is the treatment of adoptive children vs. the biological children. Stephanie says that the adopted kids were treated less than the biological kids. I as one of the adopted children can full heartedly say that we were not treated any differently. Our parents loved us all the same and treated us all with the same love, kindness, and respect. The second lie I want to address is about discipline. Stephanie has stated that when getting "spanked" there were blood and bruises. This is not true. Yes, we were spanked when necessary but never to the point of bodily harm. While on the topic of discipline, I want to say another statement made by Stephanie was that she was forced to be in the corner for 10-12 hours a day with little to no food available to her. Stephanie has taken situations out of context and used it

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to make it look like she is a victim. During school news on school days we all had desks or work stations that we sat at to do our school work. There were several times Stephanie refused to do her school assignments or threw a fit and was told she had to sit at her desk till her work was done, but she did not sit there for 10-12 hours a day and food was never denied as a punishment. Stephanie was never emaciated nor was food withheld from her. Third and lastly I'd like to say growing up with Stephanie there was a pattern of Stephanie playing victim to get attention or what she wanted. It was a way she would use to get out of trouble as a young girl. Stephanie wasn't always like this or it didn't show as much early on. My earliest memories with Stephanie are the ones of her my second oldest sister (Tiffany) myself and our younger sister Hannah and the good memories and happy times we shared. Some of those memories being playing dressup, making talent show home videos, sledding, wagon rides, big christmases in PA with Grandma and Grandpa, beach vacations with cousins every summer, H-H trips, and playing outside together. I want to sum this letter up by saying Stephanie has made some really bad accusations against our parents, church family and

APPENDIX 3

Friends I believe she does need to get some mental ~~health~~
health help to deal with her thoughts, feelings and any
trauma she may have ~~dealt~~ with from her birth
family and what ever els she is struggling with
in her head. Our Parents have not done the things
she is accusing them of doing and they do NOT
deserve the slander, the harshness, or their names
or reputations to be drug through the mud.
I don't understand why Stephanie is doing and
saying the things that she is but I hope
one day things can be different.

Cydney Seeger

March 6, 2025.

APPENDIX 4

509.040 Kidnapping.

- (1) A person is guilty of kidnapping when he unlawfully restrains another person and when his intent is:
 - (a) To hold him for ransom or reward; or
 - (b) To accomplish or to advance the commission of a felony; or
 - (c) To inflict bodily injury or to terrorize the victim or another; or
 - (d) To interfere with the performance of a governmental or political function; or
 - (e) To use him as a shield or hostage; or
 - (f) To deprive the parents or guardian of the custody of a minor, when the person taking the minor is not a person exercising custodial control or supervision of the minor as the term "person exercising custodial control or supervision" is defined in KRS 600.020.
- (2) Kidnapping is a Class B felony when the victim is released alive and in a safe place prior to trial, except as provided in this section. Kidnapping is a Class A felony when the victim is released alive but the victim has suffered serious physical injury during the kidnapping, or as a result of not being released in a safe place, or as a result of being released in any circumstances which are intended, known or should have been known to cause or lead to serious physical injury. Kidnapping is a capital offense when the victim is not released alive or when the victim is released alive but subsequently dies as a result of:
 - (a) Serious physical injuries suffered during the kidnapping; or
 - (b) Not being released in a safe place; or
 - (c) Being released in any circumstances which are intended, known or should have been known to cause or lead to the victim's death.

Effective: July 15, 2002

History: Amended 2002 Ky. Acts ch. 120, sec. 1, effective July 15, 2002. -- Amended 1980 Ky. Acts ch. 48, sec. 1, effective July 15, 1980. -- Created 1974 Ky. Acts ch. 406, sec. 76, effective January 1, 1975.

APPENDIX 4

529.100 Human trafficking.

- (1) A person is guilty of human trafficking when the person intentionally subjects one (1) or more persons to engage in:
 - (a) Forced labor or services; or
 - (b) Commercial sexual activity through the use of force, fraud, or coercion, except that if the person is under the age of eighteen (18), the commercial sexual activity need not involve force, fraud, or coercion.
- (2) Human trafficking is a Class B felony unless the victim of human trafficking is under eighteen (18) years of age, in which case it is a Class A felony.

Effective: July 15, 2024

History: Amended 2024 Ky. Acts ch. 106, sec. 7, effective July 15, 2024. -- Amended 2020 Ky. Acts ch. 75, sec. 7, effective July 15, 2020. -- Created 2007 Ky. Acts ch. 19, sec. 5, effective June 26, 2007.

APPENDIX 4

509.020 Unlawful imprisonment in the first degree.

- (1) A person is guilty of unlawful imprisonment in the first degree when he knowingly and unlawfully restrains another person under circumstances which expose that person to a risk of serious physical injury.
- (2) Unlawful imprisonment in the first degree is a Class D felony.

Effective: January 1, 1975

History: Created 1974 Ky. Acts ch. 406, sec. 74, effective January 1, 1975.

APPENDIX 4

509.030 Unlawful imprisonment in the second degree.

- (1) A person is guilty of unlawful imprisonment in the second degree when he knowingly and unlawfully restrains another person.
- (2) Unlawful imprisonment in the second degree is a Class A misdemeanor.

Effective: January 1, 1975

History: Created 1974 Ky. Acts ch. 406, sec. 75, effective January 1, 1975.

APPENDIX 5

FILED
MIKE WATTS, CLERK
JUN 12 2025
LETCHER CIRCUIT/DISTRICT COURTS
BY *Sandra Wright* D.C.

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
47TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
LETCHER CIRCUIT COURT
LETCHER CIRCUIT COURT ACTION NO. KY 13-25-0146

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY,

PLAINTIFF

VS.

Seth Long

DEFENDANT

REPORT OF NO TRUE BILL AND ORDER OF DISMISSAL

The above styled case was referred to the Grand Jury for investigation. The Grand Jury has not entered an indictment and request the matter be dismissed because:

No witness appeared to give testimony.

Insufficient evidence was presented to warrant an indictment.

Insufficient evidence presented referred for further investigation by law enforcement.

Complaining Witness has requested a dismissal.

Referred to _____ County for prosecution.

Other:

Justin Well
FOREPERSON OF THE GRAND JURY

THEREFORE IT IS ORDERED that the charges or accusations made against the above named person be and same (is) (are) dismissed, and said individual is discharged. Any bail deposited by or on behalf of said person shall be refunded by the Clerk of this Court as provided by law.

DATED: 06/12/2025
Allyson H. Caultt
JUDGE, LETCHER CIRCUIT COURT

Presented by the Foreperson of the Grand Jury to the Court, in the presence of the Grand Jury, and received from the Court by me and filed in open Court this 12 day of June, 2025. *Sandra Wright, DC*

The following appeared before the Grand Jury as a witness for the Commonwealth:

APPENDIX 5

FILED
MIKE WATTS, CLERK
JUN 12 2025
LETCHER CIRCUIT/DISTRICT COURTS
BY Sandra Wright D.C.

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
47TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
LETCHER CIRCUIT COURT
LETCHER CIRCUIT COURT ACTION NO. KY 13-03-0146

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY, PLAINTIFF

VS.

Sheryl Long DEFENDANT

REPORT OF NO TRUE BILL AND ORDER OF DISMISSAL

The above styled case was referred to the Grand Jury for investigation. The Grand Jury has not entered an indictment and request the matter be dismissed because:

- No witness appeared to give testimony.
- Insufficient evidence was presented to warrant an indictment.
- Insufficient evidence presented referred for further investigation by law enforcement.
- Complaining Witness has requested a dismissal.
- Referred to _____ County for prosecution.
- Other:

Justin Well
FOREPERSON OF THE GRAND JURY

THEREFORE IT IS ORDERED that the charges or accusations made against the above named person be and same (is) (are) dismissed, and said individual is discharged. Any bail deposited by or on behalf of said person shall be refunded by the Clerk of this Court as provided by law.

DATED: 06 / 12 / 2025
[Signature]
JUDGE, LETCHER CIRCUIT COURT

Presented by the Foreperson of the Grand Jury to the Court, in the presence of the Grand Jury, and received from the Court by me and filed in open Court this 12 day of June, 2025. Sandra Wright, D.C.

The following appeared before the Grand Jury as a witness for the Commonwealth:

Appendix 6

**CONCLUSIONS AND RESOLUTION
OF THE SESSION OF PROVIDENCE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (OPC)
CHILHOWIE, VIRGINIA
REGARDING THE MOVEMENTS KNOWN AS
THE NEW PERSPECTIVE(S) ON PAUL
AND THE FEDERAL VISION/AUBURN AVENUE THEOLOGY**

*Adopted
June 21, 2007*

WE, the undersigned members of the session of Providence Presbyterian Church of Chilhowie, Virginia, having studied our denominational committee's report on Justification which was presented to the 73rd General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in 2006 and commended to all sessions of the OPC; and having conducted our own research on the two movements popularly known as the New Perspective(s) on Paul and the Federal Vision/Auburn Avenue Theology; and having formally met together in December 2006 to discuss our findings about these two movements for the purpose of assessing the threat—if any—they might pose to the peace, purity, and unity of the Church, do hereby conclude that both the New Perspective(s) on Paul and the Federal Vision/Auburn Avenue Theology movements are out-of-accord with the Holy Scriptures and with our secondary standards, *the Westminster Confession of Faith* and *the Larger and Shorter Catechisms*, in the following areas:

The New Perspective(s) on Paul teaches and practices the following errors:

1. That the term “righteousness” in Paul’s epistles is to be defined and understood as covenant membership rather than moral equity or adherence to a moral standard.
2. That the phrase “works of the law” for justification in Paul’s writings is to be defined and understood as boundary markers identifying Israel as God’s covenant people (e.g., Sabbath observance, circumcision, dietary restrictions, etc.).
3. That the concept of justification is to be understood only as vindication.
4. That there is a second or future justification that has a different ground from one’s justification by faith in the present.
5. That the ground of justification is not the finished work of Christ but rather is the Spirit-produced works of the believer in Christ.
6. That the imputation of the active and/or passive obedience of Christ to the believer is to be denied.
7. That the literature of Second Temple Judaism is given undue interpretive weight when studying and interpreting the Bible, thus compromising the self-authenticating and self-interpreting nature of the Holy Scriptures.

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The Federal Vision/Auburn Avenue Theology teaches and practices the following errors:

1. Pitting Scripture and the Westminster Standards against each other at times.
2. Regarding the enterprise of systematic theology as inherently rationalistic.
3. Promoting a mono-covenantalism that sees one covenant, originating in the intra-trinitarian fellowship, into which man is invited, thus flattening the concept of covenant and denying the distinction between the covenant of works and the covenant of grace.
4. Teaching that election is primarily corporate and eclipsed by the concept of covenant.
5. Seeing covenant as only conditional.
6. Denying the covenant of works and the fact that Adam was in a relationship with God prior to the Fall that was legal as well as filial.
7. Denying a covenant of grace distinct from the covenant of works.
8. Denying that the law given in Eden is the same as that more fully published at Mt. Sinai and that it requires perfect obedience.
9. Viewing righteousness as relational not moral.
10. Failure to make a clear distinction between the believer's faith and Christ's faith.
11. Denying the imputation of the active obedience of Christ in the believer's justification.
12. Defining justification exclusively as the forgiveness of sins.
13. Reducing the concept of justification to Gentile inclusion.
14. Including works (by using "faithfulness" and "obedience") in the very definition of faith.
15. Failing to affirm an infallible perseverance and the indefectibility of grace.
16. Teaching a form of baptismal regeneration.
17. Denying the validity of the concept of the invisible church.
18. Overly-objectifying sacramental efficacy that downplays the need for faith and that tends toward an *ex opere operato* view of the sacraments.
19. Teaching and approving the practice of paedocommunion.
20. Allowing ecclesiology to eclipse and swallow up soteriology.

Appendix 6

FURTHERMORE, we conclude that by holding and promoting these erroneous teachings and practices the advocates of both the New Perspective(s) on Paul and the Federal Vision/Auburn Avenue Theology movements are negatively affecting various denominations, regional churches, and local congregations within the Reformed/Presbyterian Community and thus upsetting the peace, purity, and unity of the Church of Jesus Christ.

THEREFORE, we the undersigned members of the session of Providence Presbyterian Church of Chilhowie, Virginia, hereby resolve that the erroneous teachings and resulting erroneous practices of the New Perspective(s) on Paul and the Federal Vision/Auburn Avenue Theology movements will not be taught or promoted within our jurisdiction over the local church. Rather, we resolve to continue teaching and promoting the orthodox doctrines and practices of *the Westminster Confession of Faith* and *the Larger and Shorter Catechisms* as adopted by the OPC and as historically understood, which rightly contain the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures.

Duly attested and signed,

Rev. Hank L. Belfield, Pastor

Rev. John Belden, Associate Minister

Mr. Alan Bevins, Ruling Elder

Mr. Patrick L. McCune, Ruling Elder

Mr. Bradley Robinson, Ruling Elder

Mr. Walter Robinson, Ruling Elder

APPENDIX 7

Excerpts from the Minutes of Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church

Regarding Stephanie Nicole Chernyavskiy, née Long

<u>Meeting Date & Reference</u>	<u>Excerpt from the Minutes</u>
May 27, 2009 (called), Items 4-7, p. 17	<p>4. Tiffany Dawn Long, Cydney McRae Long, Stephanie Nicole Long, the daughters of Seth and Sheryl Long, came before the session as their own accuser confessing scandalous sins of deception, sexual immorality, and encouraging siblings to sin.</p> <p>5. On motion, the session indefinitely suspended Tiffany Dawn Long in accordance with BOD VI, B.3.A.</p> <p>6. On motion, the session rebuked Cydney McRae Long in accordance with BOD VI, B.2.</p> <p>7. On motion, the session admonished Stephanie Nicole Long in accordance with BOD VI, B.1.</p>
August 20, 2013, Item 10, p. 66	<p>10. On motion, the session approved receiving Stephanie Nicole Long by letter of transfer from Trinity Presbyterian Church located in Wilmington, NC, in accordance with BOD II, B.2.a. A letter will be sent to the clerk of the session in Wilmington.¹</p>
March 18, 2015, Item 8, p. 102	<p>8. On motion, the session appointed Rev. Bennett to compose a letter formally asking Stephanie Long to meet with the session at its next stated meeting at Neon Reformed Church. Notation: An update was given regarding Stephanie Long's situation, the session determined to pray for her and revisit the circumstances at the next session meeting.</p>
May 15, 2015, Item 6, p. 104	<p>6. Upon Stephanie Long's coming as her own accuser by admitting her sins of resuming a relationship with Ilya Chernyavskiy, a member of the Roman Catholic Church, against the counsel of her parents and her session (5th commandment), lying (9th commandment) and cohabiting with Ilya Chernyavskiy (7th commandment), the session, on motion, proposed to rebuke her for her scandalous sins and indefinitely suspend her privileges of</p>

¹ The session failed to record the circumstances of this transfer in its minutes, namely, that Stephanie Long, who had been a non-communicant member of NRPC, made her public profession of faith at Trinity Presbyterian Church (OPC), Wilmington, NC, while she was spending extended time with a family in Wilmington. During this time away, she regularly attended Trinity OPC. As her profession of faith was made at Trinity OPC, she was received into communicant membership at that local church from which her membership was transferred to NRPC after she returned to Whitesburg to resume living in her parent's home.

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communing membership with a review in no later than eight months, requiring as conditions of her repentance apologizing and asking forgiveness of her family, Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church, Trinity OPC Wilmington, NC, Rev. Dan Knox, Rev. Brett Mahlen, and Mr. Chris Christenson as well as ending her relationship with Ilya Chernyavskiy and ceasing to cohabit with him. Stephanie Long will be notified in writing of the session's decision according to BOD VII.

July 22, 2015, Item 8, p. 106

8. Rev. Bennett received a communication from Stephanie Long informing the session that she does not want to remain under the jurisdiction of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. By common consent the session agreed that it should not grant her request to have her name erased from NRPC while being subject to church discipline. It was agreed that Rev. Bennett should continue to dissuade Stephanie from continuing in her sin. If the session has not heard back from her by the date of the next meeting, it may increase the censure to excommunication.

September 16, 2015, Item 9, p. 107

9. Having sought to dissuade Stephanie Long from renouncing her membership at NRPC, and having received her reply renouncing the session's jurisdiction, viz., "I no longer answer to the session anyway and it is pointless to argue about their decisions since they no longer affect me," as well as clear statements indicating that she continues to cohabit with a man who is not her husband and has no credible profession of faith and that she intends to join the Roman Catholic Church, after reviewing the indefinite suspension of Stephanie Long, the session, on motion, proposed to increase censure to excommunication according to BOD VI, C.3.a.

January 30, 2018, Items 4 & 5, p. 126

4. On motion, the session, being satisfied with the evidence of her repentance and contrition, approved the readmission of Stephanie Nicole Chernyavskiy (née Long) to the privileges of the church (cf. "Suggested Forms for Use with the BOD," VIII, D).

5. On motion, the session approved sending a letter of transfer to Redeemer Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Louisville, KY on behalf of Stephanie Nicole Chernyavskiy (née Long) (BOD II, B.3.a).

September 26, 2018, Item 11, p. 129

11. Notation: Stephanie Nicole Chernyavskiy's (née Long) name was removed from the roll upon reception into communicant membership by Redeemer Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Louisville, KY on September 9, 2018.

APPENDIX 8



Session Meeting

1 message

M. Jay Bennett [REDACTED]

Tue, May 12, 2015 at 12:16 PM

To: Long Stephanie [REDACTED]

Stephanie,

The session is meeting this Friday at 4:00. We would like to schedule to speak with you over the phone during our meeting to discuss your present situation and how to proceed. Would you be willing to do that? What time would be good for you?

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Minister
Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (OPC)
P.O. Box 11
Neon, KY 41840



www.neonreformed.com
<http://www.facebook.com/nrpcopc>

APPENDIX 8



Friday phone call

1 message

Steph Long

To: M Jay Be



Wed, May 13, 2015 at 1:58 PM

Pastor Jay

I am willing to talk on Friday night. However, I expect everyone to be polite and will not tolerate anyone on the call to be insulting, or judgmental of my decision. The moment anyone starts to do so I will end the conversation.

4:30 will work to talk on the phone if that is convenient for you.

Thank you

Stephanie

Sent from my iPhone

APPENDIX 8



Session Decisions

5 messages

M. Jay Bennett <[redacted]>
To: Stephanie Lo [redacted]

Tue, May 19, 2015 at 12:37 PM

Stephanie,


I've attached a letter and appendix notifying you of decisions the session made at our May 15, 2015 stated meeting that concern you. Let me know if you have any questions.


Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Minister
Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (OPC)
P.O. Box 11
Neon, KY 41840



www.neonreformed.com
<http://www.facebook.com/nrpcopc>

2 attachments

 **Censure Proposal (Stephanie Long).pdf**
66K

 **BOD and Forms Appendix (Stephanie Long).pdf**
33K

quailbraille@gmail. [redacted]
To: "M. Jay Bennett" [redacted]

Tue, May 19, 2015 at 12:59 PM

I am willing to and have already started writing letters of apology seeking forgiveness I am unwilling to break off my relationship with Ilya and it is my intention to marry him. I have thought and prayed about (as you asked) whether I was putting my relationship with Ilya before that of my relationship with God and do not see that to be the case.

Sent from my iPhone

[Quoted text hidden]

> <Censure Proposal (Stephanie Long).pdf>

> <BOD and Forms Appendix (Stephanie Long).pdf>

M. Jay Bennett [redacted]

To: Seth Long <[redacted]>

, Lacy Andrews [redacted]

Wed, May 20, 2015 at 12:21 PM

, "Hank L. Belfield"

Gentlemen,

Below is what I sent to Stephanie Long.

Jay

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Minister
Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (OPC)
P.O. Box 11
Neon, KY 41840



APPENDIX 8

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Begin forwarded message:

[Quoted text hidden]

2 attachments

-  **Censure Proposal (Stephanie Long).pdf**
66K
-  **BOD and Forms Appendix (Stephanie Long).pdf**
33K

M. Jay Bennett [REDACTED] Wed, May 20, 2015 at 12:22 PM
To: Seth Long <[REDACTED]>, Lacy Andrews [REDACTED], "Hank L. Belfield"

Gentlemen,

Below is Stephanie's response to our letter.

Jay

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Minister
Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (OPC)
P.O. Box 11
Neon, KY 41840

[REDACTED]
www.neonreformed.com
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Begin forwarded message:

[Quoted text hidden]

M. Jay Bennett [REDACTED] Wed, May 20, 2015 at 12:26 PM
To: Seth Long <[REDACTED]>, "Hank L. Belfield" [REDACTED], Lacy Andrews
[REDACTED]s@yahoo.com>

Gentlemen,

I also communicated with Stephanie on fb private messaging. She sent the same response through that medium as what was contained in the email response I just sent. Here's how I responded:

Stephanie, if you wave your right to appeal or complain against our action, we will pronounce the censures listed in the next few weeks. Afterward, we will review your indefinite suspension in no later than 8 months. If you have remained impenitent with respect to your relationship with Ilya by either continuing to cohabit with him or marrying him, we will likely increase the censure at that time. In our view, biblically, your relationship with Ilya is sinful and should end immediately. We are praying for you and Ilya.

[Quoted text hidden]

APPENDIX 8



NEON REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

986 Hwy 317, Neon, KY 41840

May 19, 2015

Dear Stephanie,

I'm writing to you on behalf of the session of Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church to let you know that at our stated meeting on May 15, 2015 we proposed to pronounce two censures upon you. The motion reads as follows:

Upon Stephanie Long's coming as her own accuser by admitting her sins of resuming a relationship with Ilya Chernyavskiy, a member of the Roman Catholic Church, against the counsel of her parents and her session (fifth commandment), lying (9th commandment) and cohabiting with Ilya Chernyavskiy (7th commandment), the session, on motion, proposed to rebuke her for her scandalous sins and indefinitely suspend her privileges of communing membership with a review in no later than eight months, requiring as conditions of her repentance apologizing and asking forgiveness of her family, Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church, Trinity OPC Wilmington, [REDACTED] as well as ending her relationship with Ilya Chernyavskiy and ceasing to cohabit with him.

The censure of rebuke is described in our Book of Discipline (BOD) VI, A. 1. B. 2.:

Rebuke is a form of censure more severe than admonition. It consists in setting forth the serious character of the offense, reproving the offender, and exhorting him to repentance and to more perfect fidelity to the Lord Jesus Christ."

The censure of suspension is described in our BOD VI, A. 1. B. 3. a-b.:

- a. Suspension is a form of censure by which one is deprived of the privileges of membership in the church, of office, or of both. It may be for a definite or an indefinite time. Suspension of an officer from the privileges of membership shall always be accompanied by suspension from office, but the latter does not necessarily involve the former.
- b. An officer or other member of the church, while under suspension, shall be the object of deep solicitude and earnest dealing to the end that he may be restored. When the trial judicatory which pronounced the censure is satisfied of the penitence of the offender, or when the time of suspension has expired, the censure shall be removed and the offender shall be restored. This restoration shall be accompanied by a solemn admonition. Restoration to the privileges of membership may take place without restoration to those of office.

APPENDIX 8

It is also our responsibility to inform you of your right to appeal and/or complain against our proposal according to BOD VII and IX, respectively. According to BOD VII.3 (see appended document), "Notice of intention to appeal must be filed in writing, within ten days after the judgment has been announced, with the clerk or the moderator of the judicatory from which appeal is to be taken." According to BOD IX. 2 (see appended document), "A complaint shall first be presented to the judicatory which is alleged to be delinquent or in error, and this judicatory shall be asked to make amends. The complaint shall be presented as soon as possible after the alleged delinquency or error, and always within three months, unless it is shown that it could not have been presented within that time." You will also find the prescribed forms for (1) Notice of Intention to Appeal (in Judicial Cases), (2) Appeal (in Judicial Cases), and (3) Complaint appended to this letter.

Stephanie, it brings us great sadness to have come to the place of proposing to pronounce these censures. We have prayed and continue to pray that our heavenly Father might soften your heart to him that you might demonstrate the grace of repentance unto life and be restored to him and his church. The Lord Jesus calls out to you saying, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30).

On Behalf of the Session,

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Moderator of the Session

APPENDIX 8



'Censure Pronouncement (Stephanie Long)'

1 message

M. Jay Bennett

To: Stephanie Lo

Tue, Jul 21, 2015 at 5:32 PM

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Minister
Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (OPC)
P.O. Box 11
Neon, KY 41840

www.neonreformed.com
<http://www.facebook.com/nrpscpc>

 **Censure Pronouncement (Stephanie Long).pdf**
61K

APPENDIX 8



NEON REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

986 Hw 317 Neon KY 41840

May 19, 2015

Date Incorrect - Supposed to be July 21, 2015
(Note added by the committee)

Dear Stephanie,

I'm writing to you on behalf of the session of Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church to let you know that after our evening worship service on July 19, 2015 we pronounced the censures of rebuke and indefinite suspension against you. The censure of rebuke is described in our Book of Discipline (BOD) VI, A. 1. B. 2.:

Rebuke is a form of censure more severe than admonition. It consists in setting forth the serious character of the offense, reproving the offender, and exhorting him to repentance and to more perfect fidelity to the Lord Jesus Christ."

The censure of suspension is described in our BOD VI, A. 1. B. 3. a-b.:

- a. Suspension is a form of censure by which one is deprived of the privileges of membership in the church, of office, or of both. It may be for a definite or an indefinite time. Suspension of an officer from the privileges of membership shall always be accompanied by suspension from office, but the latter does not necessarily involve the former.
- b. An officer or other member of the church, while under suspension, shall be the object of deep solicitude and earnest dealing to the end that he may be restored. When the trial judicatory which pronounced the censure is satisfied of the penitence of the offender, or when the time of suspension has expired, the censure shall be removed and the offender shall be restored. This restoration shall be accompanied by a solemn admonition. Restoration to the privileges of membership may take place without restoration to those of office.

It brings us great sadness to have come to the place of pronouncing these censures against you. We have prayed and continue to pray that our heavenly Father might soften your heart to him and that you might demonstrate the grace of repentance unto life. Until that time and the lifting of your suspension you should refrain from partaking of the Lord's Supper. If you have any questions, please let us know. We love you.

On Behalf of the Session,

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Moderator of the Session

APPENDIX 8



NEON REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

986 Hwy 317 Neon KY 41840

July 31, 2015

Dear Stephanie,

The session of Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church received your request to be removed from the roll of NRPC with the expressed intent that you would be free to join St. Louis Bertrand, a Roman Catholic congregation in Louisville, KY. We were deeply saddened to hear of your intentions to persist down a road which your elders have urged you to abandon.

The session deliberated on your request during our stated meeting held on July 22, 2015. This letter is to inform you of our decision. Because the matter of your sinful actions still remain unresolved and because we believe leaving the OPC (a Bible-believing, Protestant denomination) for Roman Catholicism would be spiritually injurious to you, the elders determined to deny your request for erasure. According to our confessional standards:

“[I]t is the duty of Christians to marry only in the Lord. And therefore such as profess the true reformed religion should not marry with infidels, papists, or other idolaters: neither should such as are godly be unequally yoked, by marrying with such as are notoriously wicked in their life, or maintain damnable heresies” (Westminster Confession of Faith 24.3).

Our confessional standards forbid intermarriage between Christians and “papists” (i.e. Roman Catholics), because the Holy Bible teaches believers are not to be unequally yoked to unbelievers (2 Corinthians 6:14-18) and because our denomination does not view Roman Catholicism to be a denomination of the true Christian Church, given its teachings and practices, which contradict the Word of God in many ways. Therefore, we deny your request for erasure and strongly urge you to reconsider your desire to leave the OPC and join St. Louis Bertrand. Furthermore, we renew our spiritual counsel to you to break off your relationship with Ilya who, by his conduct throughout this ordeal, has shown no evidence of being a true believer in or follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Please note that we plan to review your suspension from the Lord’s Table at our next stated meeting, which is scheduled for September 16, 2015. If you continue to renounce the fellowship and jurisdiction of the OPC by your actions and intentions, we will likely increase your censure to that of excommunication at that meeting. Our *Book of Discipline* VI, B. 5 states:

“Excommunication is the most severe form of censure and is resorted to only in cases of offenses aggravated by persistent impenitence. It consists in a solemn declaration by an ecclesiastical judicatory that the offender is no longer considered a member of the body of Christ.”

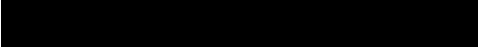
APPENDIX 8

Excommunication is a very serious matter, Stephanie. We don't desire to see this situation end with your excommunication from the church. We love you and continue to pray that our heavenly Father might soften your heart toward Him, so that you might repent of your sins, turn to Him by faith, and bring forth the fruits of repentance by your change in conduct. However, if you persist in your actions and intentions, which are contrary to a credible profession of faith in the Lord Jesus, we will have no other choice but to take this action against you. Please, reconsider your decision to follow this path of rebellion against your God, your family, and your local church. In the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ we urge you to repent and be restored to fellowship (2 Corinthians 5:20).

On behalf of the session,

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Moderator of Session

APPENDIX 8



'Letter to Dissuade'

14 messages

M. Jay Bennett

Sat, Aug 8, 2015 at 1:15 PM

To: Stephanie Lo

Stephanie, please find attached a communication from the session of NRPC.

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Minister
Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (OPC)
P.O. Box 11
Neon, KY 41840

www.neonreformed.com
<http://www.facebook.com/nrpcopc>

Letter to Dissuade.pdf
88K

il.
o: . ay enne t"

Sat, Aug 8, 2015 at 8:27 PM

Dear Pastor Jay
I have read your email containing the decision of the session. I find it ironic that you cast judgement on a situation you know nothing about. You know nothing about my relationship with Ilya other than that which others have told you and what you want to believe. You are obviously not interested in hearing the truth of the situation or the truth about my relationship with the Lord. You also have no desire to hear the truth about Ilya's relationship with the Lord but would rather make your own assumptions based upon predisposed ideas that you have and things that others may have told you. I could take offense to your blatant disrespect for my religious choices and decisions but prefer rather to turn the cheek knowing that my relationship with the Lord is solid and true.
As I have stated before I no longer consider myself to be a member of NRPC.

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 8, 2015, at 1:15 PM, M. Jay Bennett > wrote:

Stephanie, please find attached a communication from the session of NRPC.

<Letter to Dissuade.pdf>

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Minister
Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (OPC)
P.O. Box 11
Neon, KY 41840

APPENDIX 8

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M. Jay Bennett [REDACTED]

Sun, Aug 9, 2015 at 8:53 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Stephanie,

You've confused judgments with facts. While it is true that the session has arrived at a different judgment than you regarding the facts of your current circumstances, it is not true that we have a different set of facts than you. We don't. The session has based its judgment on your own testimony about the facts of your circumstances when you came as your own accuser at our May 15 stated meeting. We have spelled these facts out as well as our reasoning from the Scriptures for our judgments in our last few communications to you. Our hearts are broken for you, and it is our hope and prayer that the Lord might grant you the grace of true repentance concerning your sins against him, your family, and your church.

In His Service,

Pastor Jay

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Minister
Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (OPC)
P.O. Box 11
Neon, KY 41840

[REDACTED]
www.neonreformed.com
<http://www.facebook.com/nrpcopc>

[Quoted text hidden]

M. Jay Bennett [REDACTED]

Sun, Aug 9, 2015 at 8:56 PM

To: Seth Long <[REDACTED]>, Hank Belfield [REDACTED], Lacy Andrews
[REDACTED]

Response from Stephanie.

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Minister
Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (OPC)
P.O. Box 11
Neon, KY 41840

[REDACTED]
www.neonreformed.com
<http://www.facebook.com/nrpcopc>

Begin forwarded message:

[Quoted text hidden]

[REDACTED] **ail.** [REDACTED]
To: "M. Jay Bennett" [REDACTED]

Sun, Aug 9, 2015 at 9:25 PM

Pastor Jay

When I say that you have your facts wrong I am saying they are wrong because you have no idea about Ilya's faith or what he believes. You have made assumptions based upon a form of religion that you have studied but are unwilling to consider the fact that Ilya may not believe everything that Catholics do or hold to their principles. I am going to be finished with this conversation though since I feel it is a waste of time and I no longer need to answer to you or the session.

Sent from my iPhone

APPENDIX 8

M. Jay Bennett
To: Stephanie Lo [REDACTED]

Mon, Aug 10, 2015 at 12:02 AM

Stephanie,

Notice that in our last letter mention was not only made of Ilya's church's religion, which is clearly heretical, but also of Ilya's behavior in the past and, now, in the present toward you and your family. These are the reasons why we believe Ilya lacks a credible profession of faith.

If it is true that Ilya is a born again believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, why would he not see the sin of his ways in all of this and seek to make things right? No. He hasn't done that at all. Instead, he has followed the pattern of Satan, sneaking around in the dark to lure a young woman and take advantage of her according to his own desires. His behavior in this matter is reprehensible though, of course, ultimately forgivable, if he would repent. Apart from that repentance and your own, how can we judge otherwise?

Pastor Jay

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Minister
Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (OPC)
P.O. Box 11
Neon, KY 41840

[REDACTED]
www.neonreformed.com
<http://www.facebook.com/nrpcopc>

[Quoted text hidden]

To: "M. Jay Bennett" [REDACTED]

Mon, Aug 10, 2015 at 6:21 AM

You should be aware of the fact that Ilya is a true believer of Jesus Christ. While we all make mistakes in life we have been working together to remedy and put right that which was wrong. You are clearly not interested in hearing about the steps we have taken to make things right and therefore I am going to be finished with this unnecessary conversation.

Sent from my iPhone

[Quoted text hidden]

Jay

To: "

Mon, Aug 10, 2015 at 8:43 AM

Stephanie, while you seem bent on pretending that the session doesn't care for you, the opposite is true. We love you deeply. This is why we have come alongside you to counsel you in these matters. We are indeed very interested in your repentance, which would include Ilya's in a best case scenario. And we have laid out the steps that the Bible clearly teaches about that repentance. Again, our prayer is that God might grant you the grace of repentance in this matter.

Pastor Jay

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Minister
Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (OPC)
P.O. Box 11
Neon, KY 41840

APPENDIX 8

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[Quoted text hidden]

Mon, Aug 10, 2015 at 8:45 AM
Lacy Andrews

[REDACTED] Hank Belfield [REDACTED]

Jay,

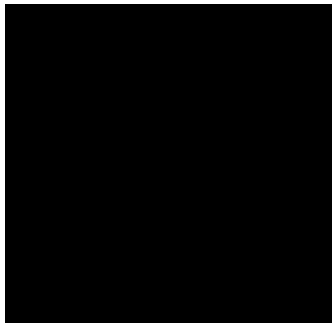
Thanks for your reply to Stephanie.

It is apparent to me that Stephanie is thinking from a place of independence rather than a place of dependence. She evidences that she has set herself up and over the authority of scripture, her shepherds and her parents. Sadly, she continues to display the marks of an unbeliever or perhaps one who has become very hardened in her sin.

Seth Long

Executive Director

HOMES Inc.



quailbraille@g
To: Jay Bennett [REDACTED]

Mon, Aug 10, 2015 at 9:01 AM

Pastor Jay

Again please stop making assumptions about situations you clearly do not understand or see the whole picture of. I never even mentioned whether or not the session cared about me or my repentance. I simply stated that you are wrong in your assumptions and judgement about Ilya's faith and mine. You do not take into consideration the steps of repentance that we have taken since my talk with the session nor are you willing to see the repentance and love that Ilya and I have for each other and my family as well. You are unwilling to consider the possibilities that things may have changed and the situation may be different. Also not every catholic is a heretic just like not every OPC member is a true believer of Jesus Christ. You are unwilling to see past the label to the values and virtues inside of Ilya and unwilling to consider the possibility that there may be more to this than meets the eye. I'm not sure whether to find it funny or sad that you are so blinded by the label "catholic" that it has paralyzed you from seeing the real truth of what is in Ilya's heart. However I find comfort knowing that God who sees all things is not blinded by a label and sees only the blood of his son Jesus Christ covering the sins of His people and their acceptance and repentance into new life with him.

Sent from my iPhone

[Quoted text hidden]

APPENDIX 8

Jay [redacted]
To: [redacted]

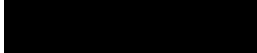
Mon, Aug 10, 2015 at 11:23 PM

Stephanie,

I won't argue with you. Your session has made a judgment about your sin based on your own testimony. We are praying for you.

Pastor Jay

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Minister
Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (OPC)
P.O. Box 11
Neon, KY 41840



www.neonreformed.com
<http://www.facebook.com/nrpcopc>

[Quoted text hidden]

[redacted] g [redacted]
o: ay ennett [redacted]

Tue, Aug 11, 2015 at 9:56 AM

I don't want to argue either. I no longer answer to the session anyway and it is pointless to argue about their decisions since they will no longer affect me. Thank you for your time

Sent from my iPhone
[Quoted text hidden]

M. J [redacted]
To: [redacted]

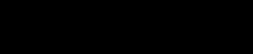
Tue, Aug 11, 2015 at 7:33 PM

Stephanie,

I think I understand what you are doing, and it saddens me. You have been fully apprised of the session's judgment since the time it was proposed. You were also made fully aware of your right to appeal that judgment in the courts of the church. You decided to waive that right for whatever reason. And now that the session has pronounced the censures of rebuke and indefinite suspension against you, you have decided to make an appeal on your own terms while simultaneously renouncing the session's jurisdiction over you. These last actions are simply more symptoms of the underlying spiritual problem. They are expressions of a hardened and impenitent heart. We love you dearly, and will continue to pray for your soul. Our door is always open for discussion.

Pastor Jay

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Minister
Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (OPC)
P.O. Box 11
Neon, KY 41840



www.neonreformed.com
<http://www.facebook.com/nrpcopc>

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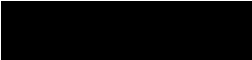
M. Jay Bennett <[redacted]
eld [redacted]
[redacted]@yahoo.com>

Seth Long [redacted], Lacy Andrews
Tue, Aug 11, 2015 at 7:37 PM

More from Stephanie...

APPENDIX 8

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Minister
Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (OPC)
P.O. Box 11
Neon, KY 41840


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<http://www.facebook.com/nrpcopc>

Begin forwarded message:


Date: August 11, 2015 at 7:33:28 PM EDT


Subject: Re: 'Letter to Dissuade'

[Quoted text hidden]

APPENDIX 8



NEON REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

986 Hw 317 Neon KY 41840

September 25, 2015

Dear Stephanie,

I'm writing to you on behalf of the session of Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church to let you know that at our stated meeting on Sept. 16, 2015 we proposed to increase your censure of indefinite suspension to excommunication. The motion reads as follows:

Having sought to dissuade Stephanie Long from renouncing her membership at NRPC, and having received her reply renouncing the session's jurisdiction, viz., "I no longer answer to the session anyway and it is pointless to argue about their decisions since they no longer affect me," as well as clear statements indicating that she continues to cohabit with a man who is not her husband and has no credible profession of faith and that she intends to join the Roman Catholic Church, after reviewing the indefinite suspension of Stephanie Long, the session, on motion, proposed to increase censure to excommunication according to BOD VI, C.3.a.

The censure of excommunication is described in our Book of Discipline (BOD) VI, B. 5:

Excommunication is the most severe form of censure and is resorted to only in cases of offenses aggravated by persistent impenitence. It consists in a solemn declaration by an ecclesiastical judicatory that the offender is no longer considered a member of the body of Christ.

It is also our responsibility to inform you of your right to appeal and/or complain against our proposal according to BOD VII and IX, respectively. According to BOD VII.3 (see appended document), "Notice of intention to appeal must be filed in writing, within ten days after the judgment has been announced, with the clerk or the moderator of the judicatory from which appeal is to be taken." According to BOD IX. 2 (see appended document), "A complaint shall first be presented to the judicatory which is alleged to be delinquent or in error, and this judicatory shall be asked to make amends. The complaint shall be presented as soon as possible after the alleged delinquency or error, and always within three months, unless it is shown that it could not have been presented within that time." You will also find the prescribed forms for (1) Notice of Intention to Appeal (in Judicial Cases), (2) Appeal (in Judicial Cases), and (3) Complaint appended to this letter.

Stephanie, it brings us great sadness to have come to the place of proposing to increase your censure to excommunication. We have prayed and continue to pray that our heavenly Father might soften your heart to him that you might demonstrate the grace of

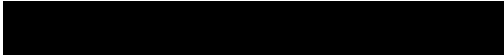
APPENDIX 8

repentance unto life and be restored to him and his church. The Lord Jesus calls out to you saying, “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

On Behalf of the Session,

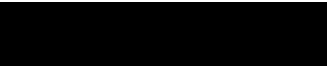
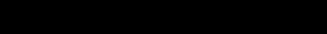
Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Clerk of the Session

APPENDIX 8



Proposed Increase of Censure with Appendix


1 message

M. Jay Bennett < >
To: Stephanie Lo 

Tue, Oct 20, 2015 at 9:09 PM

Stephanie,


Please see the attached letter and appendix from the session of NRPC.

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Minister
Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (OPC)
P.O. Box 11
Neon, KY 41840


www.neonreformed.com
<http://www.facebook.com/nrpcopc>

2 attachments

 **Increase Censure Proposal (Stephanie Long).pdf**
62K

 **BOD and Forms Appendix (Stephanie Long).pdf**
31K

APPENDIX 8



Stephanie Long

15 messages

M. Jay Bennett [REDACTED] Tue, Nov 3, 2015 at 10:17 AM
To: Seth Long <s[REDACTED]@embarqmail.com>, Lacy Andrews <[REDACTED]>, Hank Belfield

Stephanie just wrote me saying:

I am not writing this not as an appeal but rather an update on the facts of my situation. Ilya and I are not settled on St Louis Bertrand as a home church. Having been excommunicated from the church I am not sure as to whether or not I want to become Catholic or join a baptist/Methodist church here in Louisville. Several of his family attend a baptist church (including his mother). We have two separate apartments that we sleep/shower in but I do the cooking and cleaning for both of us and we have our meals together.

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Minister
Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (OPC)
P.O. Box 11

[REDACTED]
www.neonreformed.com
<http://www.facebook.com/nrpcopc>

Hank Belfield [REDACTED] Wed Nov 4 2015 at 8:28 AM
To: "M. Jay Ben [REDACTED] Long [REDACTED] Lacy Andrews [REDACTED]

Gentlemen,

From Stephanie's comments, it sounds like there is some improvement in the situation, viz., they are living in separate dwellings and are not necessarily going to join a Catholic Church. However, I do wonder why she feels the need to tell us this, if she no longer regards us as having jurisdiction over her, which has been her written claim in the past. I suspect it is because she wants to go on record as informing us that two of the reasons for which we disciplined her are not true. But even if what she writes is an accurate portrayal of the situation (which I tend to doubt, given her manipulative behavior in the past), it does not address whether or not they are sexually involved as an unmarried couple, nor does it show any sense of contrition or repentance for the sinful actions she took leading up to this point. In my opinion, there is still no viable evidence that this man is a true believer. On the contrary, his behavior throughout points to him not being a true follower of Christ. Stephanie's persistence in this relationship, despite her elders' counsel says to me that she is not truly seeking to do what is biblically upright, but trying to justify her choice to abscond with this man regardless of how such a choice affects her fiancé, her family, her church, and the credibility of her Christian profession. In short, this does not persuade me that we erred in excommunicating her; nor does it persuade me that we should change our direction at this time.

On a separate matter, I wish to inform you that I will not be in attendance at the session meeting on November 11. You may recall that when we set that date, I indicated there was a chance I might be on vacation that week. Things were not settled on pulpit supply, but they were shaping up to fall on that time of the month. As such, I could only agree on that date tentatively. As it turns out, I will indeed be off that week and so will not be attending this time around. I do not think this requires a rescheduling of the meeting. I would advise you men to go ahead and meet

20/23

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without me. Just let me know when the next meeting is scheduled for, and I will mark it on my calendar and plan to be there, Lord willing.

Yours truly,

Hank B.

[Quoted text hidden]

Lacy Andrews [redacted] Wed, Nov 4, 2015 at 9:47 AM
To: Hank Belfiel [redacted]
Cc: "M. Jay Ben [redacted]" ong <[redacted]>

Men

I agree with Hank's assessment but I was just about to write to tell you that I can't make the meeting either. We will need to reschedule. November doesn't look good.

Lacy

Sent from my iPhone

[Quoted text hidden]

Jay Bennett <[redacted]> Wed, Nov 4, 2015 at 9:58 AM
To: Lacy Andr [redacted]
Cc: Hank Belfi [redacted] Seth Long [redacted]

How about Dec. 2 or 9?

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Minister
Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (OPC)
P.O. Box 11
Neon, KY 41840

[redacted]

www.neonreformed.com

<http://www.facebook.com/nrpsopc>

[Quoted text hidden]

Lacy Andrews [redacted] Wed, Nov 4, 2015 at 10:25 AM
To: Jay Bennett [redacted]
Cc: Hank Belfiel [redacted] Seth Long [redacted]

Either date should work for me.

Lacy

Sent from my iPhone

[Quoted text hidden]

Seth Long [redacted] Wed, Nov 4, 2015 at 11:23 AM
To: Jay Ben [redacted]
Cc: Hank B [redacted]

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NEON REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

986 Hw 317, Neon, KY 41840

January 12, 2016

Dear Stephanie,

I'm writing to you on behalf of the session of Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church to let you know that after morning worship on December 6 Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church pronounced the censure of excommunication against you. This censure is described in our Book of Discipline (BOD) VI, B. 5:

Excommunication is the most severe form of censure and is resorted to only in cases of offenses aggravated by persistent impenitence. It consists in a solemn declaration by an ecclesiastical judicatory that the offender is no longer considered a member of the body of Christ.

Stephanie, it brings us great sadness to have come to the pronouncing this censure upon you. We have prayed and continue to pray that our heavenly Father might soften your heart to him that you might demonstrate the grace of repentance unto life and be restored to him and his church. The Lord Jesus calls out to you saying, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30).

Also, I wanted to take a moment to reaffirm what the session tried to communicate to you during our conference call at our last stated meeting. We are thankful that you have a sense of sorrow for the pain you have caused in the lives of those who love you. But such sorrow does not constitute repentance. Godly sorrow leads to repentance and salvation without regret (2 Corinthians 7:10). It is one thing to grieve the fact that your actions have hurt others. It is another to repent of those actions. For example, a criminal might hurt someone by stealing his car. And the criminal might later call to tell the victim that he is truly grieving over the pain he caused. But if he also says, "Nonetheless, I'm keeping the car," then there is no true repentance. This is the attitude we perceived from you and Ilya during our telephone call.

We continue to pray for you. If at any point in the future you would like to talk further, our door is always open.

On Behalf of the Session,

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Clerk of the Session

APPENDIX 8



Censure Pronouncement Notification

1 message

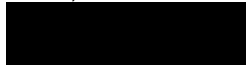
M. [Redacted]
To: [Redacted]

Fri, Jan 15, 2016 at 10:06 AM

Stephanie,

Please see the attached letter from the Session of Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church.

Rev. M. Jay Bennett
Minister
Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church (OPC)
P.O. Box 11
Neon, KY 41840



www.neonreformed.com
<http://www.facebook.com/nrpcopc>

Censure Pronouncement Notification (Stephanie Long).pdf
63K

Appendix 9: Believe and Verify

There are two instances from the interview with Rev. ██████████ that illustrate the deficiency of “believe and verify.” First, as he described to the committee the nature of his assistance of Mrs. Chernyavskiy, Rev. ██████████ said,

[Mrs. Chernyavskiy] had written [Mr. Long] who was moderator of session and was not getting a response; and at that point, I suggested, “Well, let’s see who’s the stated clerk of session, and maybe we can write the clerk of session.” I opened a copy of the GA minutes, which lists clerks of session, and discovered—and frankly I was dismayed to find out—that it was my friend Hank Bellfield, and the request for materials was sent to him and with his help it was answered very promptly. A few days later she got a cover letter from [Mr. Long], a letter with a couple of pages.

This presentation of the events made it appear that the NRPC session was being unresponsive to Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s request.

The session’s timeline of actions tells a different story. Mrs. Chernyavskiy contacted the NRPC church email on August 17, 2024, requesting a copy of minutes relevant to her membership and discipline at NRPC. As noted by Rev. ██████████, Mr. Long happened to be the moderator at the time. He responded to a text from Mrs. Chernyavskiy on August 22, 2024, saying, “Is this about the communication that you sent to the church email address? If so, Hannah forwarded it to me, I forwarded it to our clerk. Communications to the sessions are taken up at the next session meeting.” She responded, “Yes. Thank you. I wasn’t sure since [Rev. Bennett] isn’t there anymore who processes those emails or if it was even the correct one. Thanks!” Rev. Bellfield drafted a Word document containing the relevant portions of the minutes in early September, and this was reviewed by the session on September 17, 2024. Rev. Andrews was not able to attend that meeting, and the session postponed sending the minutes to Mrs. Chernyavskiy until they could be reviewed by him. They had a called meeting on September 30, 2024, with both Rev. Andrews and Rev. Bennett present (the latter as a guest, having taken a call to another congregation). The minutes were sent to Mrs. Chernyavskiy on October 1, 2024. Contrary to Rev. ██████████ presentation, the session was not unresponsive, but rather was seeking to be careful considering the circumstances surrounding the situation.¹

Second, and far more important, Rev. ██████████ emphatically stated, “When you look at the timeline, the discipline case followed the exposure of the abuse and followed the sexual abuse examinations of the girls.” As demonstrated above, the exact opposite is true (lines 343–362, 807–821). The committee can only conclude that Rev. ██████████ believed Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s testimony, but quite clearly did not verify. In fact, it would be impossible to verify it adequately if, as Rev. ██████████ acknowledged, he never spoke with the Longs, civil/criminal procedures notwithstanding.² He would later state, “I have not run into anything that I have seen that undermined what she was saying.” The committee believes that more thorough verification would have likely led to a significantly different conclusion.

¹ As noted in the report, Ms. Caroline McKuen’s involvement with Rev. Bennett, Rev. Belden, and the Longs began in September 2024 as well.

² As the committee reviewed Rev. ██████████ testimony and Mrs. Chernyavskiy’s information she submitted as evidence, we found that Rev. ██████████ spoke to a good number of people about this situation, even having two long phone calls with Mr. David Nakhla *about* Mr. Long, but still did not ever personally contact Mr. Long. This is a significant failure on the part of Rev. ██████████