

Hi Dave,

I need to make you aware of recent developments regarding Boulder Church and the RMC Executive Committee.

On Tuesday of this week, Mark Johnson and I were invited to the April meeting of the RMC Executive Committee regarding the subject of the recent Boulder Church vote to accept your request for membership transfer. We were there for about two hours giving a timeline and description of events as they transpired and answering questions, sometimes quite pointed, from the committee.

After we left, the committee discussed the issue for around another hour before voting a course of action they intend to pursue regarding the situation.

Yesterday evening I had dinner with Mic Thurber at which time he delivered to me a letter from the committee detailing their resolved intentions.

In short, the committee has requested by a significant majority of members (it was not as close a vote as the 60-40 vote at Boulder) that the Boulder Church revisit the previous decision and vote to rescind the acceptance, an act that would automatically revert your membership to Glendale City without challenge. Should we fail to do so, the committee will revisit the issue at their June 18 meeting, at which time they will vote to initiate the church manual established process for disbanding a rebellious church. It is not a question of if they will do this. They made it clear that they will if we have not by then rescinded our action.

The process according to the manual at that point will be the calling of another Boulder Church business meeting at which the conference officers will present the committee's position and explain what options the church has regarding the situation. If the manual is followed exactly as written, the request of the committee will be for the Boulder Church to either take action against your membership or vote to voluntarily disband the church. This will be the action because the executive committee does not, on its own, have the authority to disband the church. That would require a vote of a conference wide constituency meeting, and for many reasons that is something they would prefer to not have to do.

If it should occur that the Boulder Church at that time elects to not come into alignment with the committee's requirements and does not vote to disband itself, then the committee will begin action to call a constituency session to take up the

matter. At this point, the Boulder Church would have the option of appealing the committee's position to the Mid-America Executive Committee for arbitration, meaning the Mid-America Committee would either dismiss the RMC Committees requirement (highly unlikely) or affirm that the calling of a constituency is appropriate.

At that point the fate of the Boulder Church would be in the hands of the constituency meeting, a situation that there is a very good chance Boulder would not survive.

I call your attention to these things because I must, tomorrow, begin to address this situation with the membership (something I will do at the end of the service), and do not want you to be surprised when it comes up. Also I want to prepare you for the fact that you may find my engagement on this issue to seem different than before. Before that occurs, I want to explain.

To this point, beyond trying to hold the church together, it has been my effort to assure that your rights to transfer, as a member in regular standing, were protected, and to defend the local church's authority on the issue of membership by assuring the process was followed fully to the letter and spirit of the procedure described in the church manual, while at the same time making the church aware of any official positions relevant to this situation adopted by the denomination (Fundamental Beliefs, Official GC statements, input from RMC, etc.). These things I have done at every meeting to date we have held on the issue regarding your transfer.

But now that this process has been followed, my focus as pastor must shift to what I believe to be in the best interest of the whole of the congregation, which currently faces a literal existential crisis.

One of the things Mark said to you back when we first met on this issue is that Mid-America Union is not Pacific Union, and RMC is not Southern California, and it is possible this might ultimately lead to a significant crisis for the Boulder Church, and potentially for your membership as well. It seems that day has indeed come.

At this point, the only way to guarantee the security of Boulder remaining a church and your membership not being ultimately imperilled (if Boulder is dropped, you will become a member of the conference church along with the rest of us, with the conference executive committee having full rights to drop your membership, which

they will) is either for you to request a transfer back to Glendale City or for Boulder to go through this process again, with a board recommendation and a business meeting, resulting in a decision at the business meeting to rescind the previous action.

Already the action previously taken has caused serious disruption in the community. And as pastor, I don't want to see the community further stressed. To that end, I will be pragmatically advocating that the church does indeed rescind the previous action and return you to Glendale City, an action I believe to be in both your and the church's best interest at this time.

I do not think it was wrong for you to test this issue, and you were fully in your right to request transfer. In addition, the church was fully within its rights to accept your membership, though the action was a direct violation of membership policy and the specific language of Fundamental Belief 23. And based upon this reality, the RMC Executive Committee was within their authority to call us on this action. They could have chosen to ignore it, as Southern California has chosen to do with Glendale City and perhaps others, but they did not choose to do so. And as I said, it was their right to so choose. Colorado is not California.

So having tested this, and determined that a 60-40 majority of the Boulder Adventist Church is willing to accept you into membership (though seemingly at the cost of at least 3 significant leaders and several important volunteers), it has become apparent that the RMC Executive Committee is not willing to let the action stand. And being as you stated at the beginning of this process, it is not your desire to cause harm to Boulder, I appeal to you at this point to request transfer and protect this community that has voted to affirm you.

It is significant, I think, that the executive committee did not push to immediate action, a fact that signals their desire to see this resolved without harm to the Boulder Church. And I think it is important to note that the reason for their action is your legal marriage to another man, not the reality that you are gay. There has been nothing in any of this that suggests the executive committee desires to initiate an inquisition, only that they cannot sanction official recognition into membership of someone whose marriage is specifically at odds with official church position on the subject.

I appreciate your consideration of this issue. As I mentioned, I will tomorrow begin making the congregation aware of the situation and the steps that follow. If I hear from you in a relevant way, I will amend my comments pursuant to that input.

May God help us as we seek to find the best way forward in our time.

Pastor Geoff