

Official Statement
September 26, 2012

Inclusive Ministerial Ordination: An Appeal for Understanding

We acknowledge the concerns and questions our recent special constituency vote raised among some of our church family and administrators and regret that some misunderstood our motives and intentions. We unwaveringly stand in solidarity with our worldwide church family in faith, belief, doctrine and mission and appeal for understanding.

We were compelled to act on our conscience and convictions because we believe it will and already is having a positive impact on our churches, ministries and mission; we believe it is morally and ethically right; we believe that God calls whom He chooses and our responsibility and privilege is to fully recognize His proven calls; we want to see new generations of members unabashedly engage in the mission of our church; and we want to do all we can to hasten the promised return of Christ.

We accept, respect and understand that practicing inclusive ministerial ordination would not work well in all parts of the world, and while we in no way wish to force others to take this step, we believe it is necessary in our field and in the context of the culture in which we minister.

We pray that our action will not close doors, but open the way for the Holy Spirit to continue moving mightily in our union and beyond. We pray that those who may not be ready to embrace this change in their church, conference, union or division will understand our need and the opportunity it provides us to grow God's kingdom in our part of the vineyard. And we pray that we all will earnestly seek to navigate these uncharted waters in a way that brings glory to God, strengthens our church family and advances Christ's mission.

In His Service,

Dave Weigley, Rob Vandeman, Seth Bardu
Columbia Union Conference Officers
Columbia Union Conference Executive Committee

