

Appendix #7

Relevant emails between Thomas Kunkel and the Nashville Presbytery stated clerk, Mr. R. Neil Spence and the current moderator of the Nashville Presbytery, Dr. George Grant

nspence@rpcdickson.org <nspence@rpcdickson.org>

To: Thomas Kunkel

Tue, Mar 1 at 11:52 AM

Rev. Kunkel:

Nashville Presbytery referred your communication to our Committee on Judicial Business for investigation. You will be contacted directly by a member of the committee when they are ready to interview you.

Thanks so much for reaching out to me.

Grace to you,

RNS

nspence@rpcdickson.org <nspence@rpcdickson.org>

To: Thomas Kunkel

Mon, Apr 18 at 10:37 AM

Dear Rev. Kunkel:

I apologize for the delay in responding to your email. It came at a time of overwhelming activity for me.

At our 110th Stated Meeting, April 12, 2022, Nashville Presbytery heard a report from our Committee on Judicial Business (CJB) which had been charged with investigating the report you made concerning the Christian character of Rev. Steve Robertson.

The CJB reviewed their process and the evidence they considered and recommended that Nashville Presbytery find “no strong presumption of guilt” on the part of Rev. Robertson (that is the language suggested by BCO 31-2 and required by our Standing Rules). This means no charges will be brought against him in this matter.

Yours for the faith,
R. Neil Spence

Thomas Kunkel <trkunkel@yahoo.com>

To: nspence@rpcdickson.org

Mon, Apr 18 at 10:45 AM

Mr. Spence,

The Presbytery didn't even hear about the false accusations he made against me which have caused damage to my reputation as a minister of the Gospel.

The fact that they didn't even do an interview to try and understand the situation seems odd at best. I would like to have a phone conversation with someone from the committee to try to understand both the process and the decision.

- Thomas K.

Thomas Kunkel <trkunkel@yahoo.com>

To: nspence@rpcdickson.org

Fri, Apr 29 at 4:13 PM

Mr. Spence,

Any word on the chairman?

While we are waiting on that, I have a question for you as the stated clerk. In your communication on March 1, you stated "You will be contacted directly by a member of the committee when they are ready to interview you." You obviously anticipated that I would be interviewed. Is it standard procedure to recommend the dismissal of charges without even contacting the party making the accusations? What happened? Would you please send me the relevant BCO material on judicial committees? Thank you in advance.

Also, I am again requesting all of the Nashville Presbytery paperwork on my case including the CJB report.

- Thomas Kunkel

nspence@rpcdickson.org <nspence@rpcdickson.org>

To: Thomas Kunkel

Mon, May 2 at 8:59 AM

Rev. Kunkel:

You're correct I assumed you would be contacted. That is my mistake. How the investigation was conducted was up to the committee and I'm sure they handled it using their own judgment.

I'll check with the chairman again and get you the BCO material.

Grace to you,

RNS

Thomas Kunkel <trkunkel@yahoo.com>

To: George@ParishPres.org, Thomas Kunkel

Fri, May 6 at 10:19 AM

Dear Dr. Grant,

Once again, I do greatly appreciate your willingness to talk yesterday.

When we spoke, you mentioned that the reason that I was never interviewed regarding my letter initiating a discipline case against TE Steve Robertson in the Nashville Presbytery is not that the case was definitively decided or resolved but that the jurisdiction was transferred to MTW.

Having looked into the issue (and please correct me if I am wrong!) it seems that as a body, MTW has no formal authority to conduct discipline cases in the PCA. I am guessing that MTW accompanied their request to the Nashville Presbytery with a boilerplate request similar to “we prefer to handle this matter internally” but my understanding of the BCO suggests that since they don’t have the authority to carry out a discipline case even if they wanted to, there is no “jurisdiction” that the Nashville Presbytery can transfer the case to.

This is made even more concerning considering that my letter outlined a brief history of MTW specifically covering up the sins and scandals of their own missionaries which seems to make this decision especially inappropriate.

In the introductory conversation that we had with Gabe, you mentioned; “I’m currently in a conference session in Birmingham—the GRN, an organization aimed at saving the PCA.” This is a noble goal. We all recognize the need for continuing sanctification on the denominational level due to the constant encroachment of sin.

Recognizing this, it is my conviction that sanctification needs to begin at home in obedience to Jesus’ words to us in Matthew 7:2-5:

“For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.”

Is Christ not calling the Nashville Presbytery to set its own house in order before removing the speck from the eye of the PCA?

Functionally, the Nashville Presbytery proclaimed Steve Robertson innocent of gross slander, or in the words of your stated clerk Mr. Spence; The “Nashville Presbytery find[s] ‘no strong presumption of guilt’ on the part of Rev. Robertson (that is the language suggested by BCO 31-2 and required by our Standing Rules). This means no charges will be brought against him in this matter.”

For all intents and purposes, the Nashville Presbytery has declared Steve innocent without doing any investigation into the evidence that I asked the Presbytery to look into.

Let’s speak clearly about the elephant in the room. The Robertson family (not just Steve) is very well politically connected in the PCA. My hope is that integrity and the honor of Christ will take priority over political and economic concerns. If not... how are we any different than the Roman Catholic church who prioritized “the organization” over the truth (and by doing so protected well-connected predatorial priests over their victims)?

Dr. Grant, I am not blaming you personally. I know you only became the moderator of the Nashville Presbytery recently and I hope I am correctly perceiving that your desire is to bring our beloved PCA back to the road of following the words of Christ in integrity and sincerity of heart.

Therefore, I am personally petitioning you that the Nashville Presbytery take up this discipline case once again as is her calling, not just according to the BCO but far more importantly, by the instructions of Christ Himself in the Scriptures.

If the Nashville Presbytery acts inappropriately in this matter revealing internal corruption, doesn't that exposure tend toward the glory of Christ as He purges the leaven from His beloved church? Jesus didn't ask that we use political pressure to purify His bride but the simple tools of confronting sin.

In His Name, let me state clearly that I am petitioning that the Nashville Presbytery honors her responsibility before the Lord to take up this case. If you need me to file another formal request, I am willing to do so. Please let me know.

In the name of Christ,

Thomas Kunkel

Pastor George Grant <george@parishpres.org>

To: Thomas Kunkel

Fri, May 6 at 10:44 AM

Thomas:

I certainly will refer your request back to the judicial committee of the Nashville Presbytery.

The judicial committee previously contacted members of your former presbytery, obtained presbytery records, and received direct communication from MTW and on that basis allowed MTW to oversee the matter. So, my guess is that they will only be willing to reopen the matter to consider a case if they were to receive outside collaboration of the charges you have leveled.

As I understand it, following a series of phone conversations this morning about this situations, MTW informed the presbytery and the judicial and missions committees of our presbytery that they were taking up the case as an HR matter, not as a judicial case—and in that sense assumed jurisdiction over the matter.

In any case, I am fairly certain that in order to be reopened, this matter will require a great deal more independent substantiation—which should be sent to the NP standing clerk, Neil Spence.

Standfast. George Grant

Note: I did send additional information to the clerk Neil Spence on June 6th, 2022. I never received confirmation of the letter or any reply whatsoever from Mr. Spence. Dr. Grant did acknowledge the receipt of the documents but so far (now nearly six weeks later) I have not been contacted by anyone from the Nashville Presbytery.