



THE PRESBYTERY OF SAN FRANCISCO  
SYNOD OF THE PACIFIC PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

February 23, 2005

Dear Members of the Cameron House Community,

We are ministers and elders of San Francisco Presbytery who have been charged with responding to your request for an apology, following the years of hurt you have experienced after the disclosure of the sexual abuse by Dick Wichman. We want to send you this preliminary letter to inform you of our progress and let you know how we are undertaking this responsibility.

We are deeply grieved by what has happened, and we know that the sooner you receive a response from us, the better—you have waited long. But we do not want our apology to be meaningless. Before we can say we are sorry, and have it be more than just sympathy, we need to understand, to the best of our ability, the nature of your suffering, and the history that has brought things to this point so many years later, unresolved.

We have been, in small groups or as a committee, listening to some survivors and family members, and are hoping to hear from more. We have all read the final report of your own Healing Task Force, and are very impressed with the amount of openness and honesty you have achieved. We are trying to understand more about how the rules of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in 1988 prevented a more just outcome, looking at how they have changed so far, and expecting more changes if the current amendments to the Book of Order are ratified. We want to understand how we can prevent this kind of thing from happening in the future. To the extent possible, we want to explore the dynamics that allowed this to be hidden for so many years within the presbytery. We are looking at how racism may have played a part.

We have been looking at what other denominations have done to effect healing and help after sexual abuse, and are hoping to bring to you a healing service that will be meaningful at your workshop in April.

Please bear with us while we do the best job we can. You are in our prayers, and we give thanks for your courage and your willingness to be honest about what happened. We are learning much from you.

May the blessings of Christ be with you.

San Francisco Presbytery Cameron House Response Task Force

Rev. Diana Cheifetz  
Elder Alice Okazaki  
Rev. Charles Tinsley

Elder Cynthia Joe  
Rev. Linda Regan  
Rev. Bradford Woo

Rev. Lyn Juckniess  
Rev. Kathy Runyeon

If you have questions or suggestions, you may contact Linda Regan, Chair, at (925)672-4346 or Kathy Runyeon at the Presbytery Office.