

January 2, 2005

Brethren of the NASU Steering Committee:

This letter is in response to your request for an ecclesial declaration on the NASU unity proposal. Circumstances compel us to send this letter rather than respond with the provided "Declaration" form for the following reasons: 1) We have already corresponded with you on 10-2-02 and 1-13-03 concerning our inability to support the NASU proposal as a basis of unity, and there has been no significant change in the proposal addressing our concerns over the intervening two years, 2) we do not feel it proper to participate in an action which will contribute to further division of the household, 3) your call for ecclesial declaration represents an unsolicited intervention into our ecclesia, but your newly introduced "inclusive approach" forces some type of communication to keep from being counted as accepting of the proposal.

We are disappointed that the NASU committee has chosen to force ecclesial participation by threatening to count them as included unless they evoke the potentially disruptive ecclesial action of declaring that they wish to "stand apart". Though this may be a politically cunning "tactical maneuver", it is not doing household business "decently and in order" as your cover letter alludes to. Should not unresponsive Unamended ecclesias be assumed to be, at the very least, "non" participating, given the NASU proposal's "Inter-Ecclesial Fellowship Practice" requirement that Unamended ecclesias (unlike Amended ecclesias) must "agree with" the NASU understanding? It is clear from your cover letter that the "inclusive approach" does not reflect a change in the NASU "Inter-Ecclesial Fellowship Practice", but rather, clearly indicates that NASU is proposed as a new test of fellowship, in effect erecting yet another fellowship barrier in our communities! (Cover Letter, 11-1-04, "Fellowship") We entreat you to consider the potential harm that may be done should yet another fellowship barrier be erected.

We are hopeful that you will show respect for all your brothers and sisters and their respective ecclesias by honestly and completely reporting the results of your call for declarations. Many believe that your committee has a history of disregarding and/or not reporting unfavorable responses and concerns. "Spinning" or incomplete reporting of ecclesial declarations will only give rise to further mistrust.

The St. Louis ecclesia will continue to break bread exclusively on the Birmingham Unamended Statement of Faith (BUSF) and welcome all who endorse its tenets.

The Brothers and Sisters of the St. Louis Unamended Ecclesia

CC: Unamended ecclesias

Ecclesial Secretary: Please share this letter with your members. Thank you.