

Re: Previous Concern with NTD District

Ladies and gentlemen of the North Texas District Presbytery,

I apologize for sending this email to you on a Saturday night. I hate to disrupt your preparation for Sunday services. However my preparation for Sunday services have been greatly disrupted by an email I received from Corrie Harlan at 2:37 pm stating that, after intense questioning during our Thursday Zoom meeting, our executive officers suddenly recalled that the email that I sent to Kermit Bell detailing the report of the interview that David McLain and I conducted with Eli Stewart on February 10, 2023, had in fact been relayed to the EAC only five days after it was received by Kermit. I am shocked.

I want to relate to you that I have had no contact by anyone from the District since our Thursday meeting. I was so disturbed by the responses – and lack of responses – I received from Kermit about his handling of such a sensitive report that I sat down on Friday afternoon and wrote a letter that I intended to email to the entire Executive Presbytery on Monday morning. I began the letter by reminding them of the constitutional authority structure of the NTD. When the District Council is not in session, the responsibility of governing falls to the District Presbytery in session which in turn empowers the executives to act on our behalf. With that authority understood, I then requested answers to three specific questions regarding Kermit Bell's handling of the Eli Stewart scandal. In light of today's events, I am attaching that letter for all of you to read as well.

Also attached are screened captures of text messages from Gaylan Claunch and Elwyn Johnston that I received on Monday, April 29 stating that neither Gregg nor Gaylan had received my email until that day when I sent it to them because it became apparent to me that Kermit never did. You were all present at the Zoom meeting when Kermit was intensely questioned about what he did with the report. He said it did not contain new information, that he had already "dealt with" Eli the previous fall, and various other excuses, but at no time did any of the three of them admit that they had dealt with the February report.

Additionally, I have attached the original report that I sent to Kermit and Eli on February 13, 2023. (Please note an error in the original email, I mistyped "November" instead of "February" as the date of the interview.) As District Presbyters, I would like you to read the report and ask yourself two questions:

1. If a member of my Sectional Committee had sent me a report with allegations at the level of this email, is that something I would forward on to higher authorities in the District?
2. If I had read a report that contained this level of information, would it be possible that I would have forgotten about it completely a mere eight weeks later?

If in your Spirit given discernment, you feel that your answers to those questions differ from the actions taken by our Executive Leadership, I would invite you to join me in invoking Article III, Section 7c. Of the NTD Bylaws which state:

*Any one-third of the members of the District Presbytery shall have the prerogative of calling a special session of the District Presbytery by presenting a signed request to the district superintendent who shall determine the time of such meeting in consultation with the Executive Presbytery.*

If my math is correct (which is always questionable) that would be about ten of us. I propose that we call for a special session of the District Presbytery to take place before the General Council gathers in June. From my reading of Corrie's email, there are only two possible conclusions; our three Executive Leaders are experiencing a crisis of competency or a crisis of integrity. I need not remind you how serious the

stakes. We have a heinous scandoul of sexual misconduct that we already know reaches to the level of Disrtict Staff, my concern is that it goes higher than that.

May we have the God-given courage to lead in the light of eternal truth and integrity instead of the comfort of temporal relationships. "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free."

Cordially,