

July 23, 2014

TO: Scott Wheatley
Oakton Virginia Stake
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

CC: Mark Harrison
Vienna Ward
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Dear President Wheatley,

I am writing in response to the excommunication of my wife, Kate Kelly, for her involvement in Ordain Women and for the act of “conduct contrary to the laws and order of the Church.” Your and Bishop Harrison’s collusion to excommunicate Kate in absentia from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and your behavior throughout the process is dishonorable, a breach of ecclesiastical trust, and unworthy of a Melchizedek priesthood holder. This was evidenced by your misuse of your position as Stake President to compel Kate to meet with you days before we moved – not to show compassion or love unfeigned for her, not to engage her in conversation about her feelings toward to Church or her involvement with Ordain Women, nor to mediate or attempt efforts for resolution – but only as a step in your excommunication strategy.

As a Melchizedek priesthood holder myself, I am ashamed of your and Bishop Harrison’s malicious conduct and the magnitude of dishonesty you have demonstrated throughout the process. As lay leaders for the Church and as Melchizedek priesthood holders you are required to use your authority not “to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness” (D&C 121:37), yet you and Bishop Harrison have done so. The steps you have taken to cover up your true motives and obfuscate Kate’s disciplinary process suggests the disciplinary council was rotten to the core. Targeting Kate alone without attempting to contact me regarding my involvement in Ordain Women further demonstrates the corruption in the disciplinary process and the systematic gender inequality rampant in the Church.

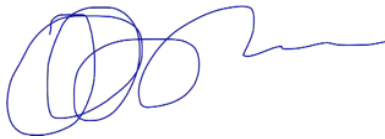
From the very beginning, I have been an integral part of Ordain Women including encouraging and supporting my wife in pursuing and developing Ordain Women; supporting and participating in public actions; purchasing, designing, building, and continuing to maintain the ordainwomen.org website; participating in the Ordain Women Male Allies Committee; and in many other ways. Additionally, I have had a profile on the Ordain Women website [<http://ordainwomen.org/project/hi-im-neil/>] for over a year that clearly and publicly states my support for the ordination of women in the Church and that I disapprove of the systematic gender inequality in the Church. Finally, I have also publicly discussed – including with local and national radio, television, and newspaper

outlets – my unequivocal support for my wife and the Ordain Women grassroots movement, my disapproval of gender inequality in the Church, and my sincere desire my actions will help facilitate policy changes regarding gender and priesthood in the Church.

For me and many others like me my participation in Ordain Women reenergized my activity in the Church and gave me hope that there was room for us. Bishop Harrison's preference to excommunicate my wife indicates to me that I was wrong. Gender inequality is one of many topics within Mormonism I have questions about and your and the Bishop's efforts to silence my wife and the Ordain Women movement demonstrates to me that the Church is not a place for those with sincere questions and who are honestly seeking the truth.

As a Melchizedek priesthood holder your failure to discipline me regarding my actions with Ordain Women demonstrates the inherent sexism in the disciplinary process taken against my wife. Neither you nor Bishop Harrison have contacted me or spoken to me about my involvement in Ordain Women. Therefore, I formally request you overturn Bishop Harrison's excommunication decision regarding Kate and I request you reinstate her to full fellowship in the Church.

I await your response,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops followed by a horizontal line.

J. Neil Ransom