

Bum Rap – Akron Beacon Journal

After reading the Nov. 14 story headlined “Two area churches leave Presbyterians,” I had to sigh again – more bad press for my denomination.

It seems being Presbyterian these days means being the butt of *Saturday Night Live* jokes, as well as making the headlines in the Beacon Journal and elsewhere. So much for media grace.

Not mentioned in the story are some of the good things about being a Presbyterian these days.

The gender-sensitive “policy paper” referred to I know nothing about. But I do know about the gender-dominant language of the Bible, written in a time when women had few, if any, rights, let alone careers or voting rights.

What is wrong with allowing churches the option of using more neutral language during prayer, if an individual congregation wants to?

As far as debates about Jesus Christ as the only son of God, I can only imagine – having never attended an annual Presbyterian General Conference – that such a strong debate with predictable results would occur at such an event. After all, Presbyterians have always looked to great scholars, including Abraham Lincoln, for inspiration.

What I do know is that at Christ Presbyterian Church in Canton, the Apostles’ Creed is recited every week without fail, along with the call to worship, confession, hymns praising Jesus Christ (most, if not all, using traditional terms and metaphor) and a relevant, honest sermon.

I also know that the Presbyterian Church (USA) still has missionaries volunteering and working around the world, including in China and Iraq.

So for the two churches discussed in the article that want to leave the largest Presbyterian denomination in the United States, I can only say: Thanks for giving the denomination I grew up with more bad press, and I wish you well on your journey – alone.

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