

1 **OVERTURE 61** from the Calvary Presbytery (to OC)
2 “Declare the ‘Danvers Statement’ as a Biblically Faithful Declaration”

3
4 **Whereas**, the Council on Biblical Manhood & Womanhood’s "Danvers Statement" declares:

5
6 1. Both Adam and Eve were created in God’s image, equal before God as persons and
7 distinct in their manhood and womanhood (Gen 1:26-27, 2:18).

8
9 2. Distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God as part of the
10 created order, and should find an echo in every human heart (Gen 2:18, 21-24; 1 Cor
11 11:7-9; 1 Tim 2:12-14).

12
13 3. Adam's headship in marriage was established by God before the Fall, and was not a
14 result of sin (Gen 2:16-18, 21-24, 3:1-13; 1 Cor 11:7-9).

15
16 4. The Fall introduced distortions into the relationships between men and women (Gen
17 3:1-7, 12, 16). In the home, the husband’s loving, humble headship tends to be
18 replaced by domination or passivity; the wife's intelligent, willing submission tends to
19 be replaced by usurpation or servility. In the church, sin inclines men toward a worldly
20 love of power or an abdication of spiritual responsibility, and inclines women to resist
21 limitations on their roles or to neglect the use of their gifts in appropriate ministries.

22
23 5. The Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, manifests the equally high value
24 and dignity which God attached to the roles of both men and women (Gen 1:26-27,
25 2:18; Gal 3:28). Both Old and New Testaments also affirm the principle of male
26 headship in the family and in the covenant community (Gen 2:18; Eph 5:21-33; Col
27 3:18-19; 1 Tim 2:11-15).

28
29 6. Redemption in Christ aims at removing the distortions introduced by the curse. In
30 the family, husbands should forsake harsh or selfish leadership and grow in love and
31 care for their wives; wives should forsake resistance to their husbands' authority and
32 grow in willing, joyful submission to their husbands’ leadership (Eph 5:21-33; Col
33 3:18-19; Tit 2:3-5; 1 Pet 3:1-7). In the church, redemption in Christ gives men and
34 women an equal share in the blessings of salvation; nevertheless, some governing and
35 teaching roles within the church are restricted to men (Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 11:2-16; 1 Tim
36 2:11-15).

37
38 7. In all of life Christ is the supreme authority and guide for men and women, so that
39 no earthly submission-domestic, religious, or civil-ever implies a mandate to follow a
40 human authority into sin (Dan 3:10-18; Acts 4:19-20, 5:27-29; 1 Pet 3:1-2).

41
42 8. In both men and women a heartfelt sense of call to ministry should never be used to
43 set aside Biblical criteria for particular ministries (1 Tim 2:11-15, 3:1-13; Tit 1:5-9).
44 Rather, Biblical teaching should remain the authority for testing our subjective
45 discernment of God’s will.

1
2 9. With half the world’s population outside the reach of indigenous evangelism; with
3 countless other lost people in those societies that have heard the gospel; with the
4 stresses and miseries of sickness, malnutrition, homelessness, illiteracy, ignorance,
5 aging, addiction, crime, incarceration, neuroses, and loneliness, no man or woman who
6 feels a passion from God to make His grace known in word and deed need ever live
7 without a fulfilling ministry for the glory of Christ and the good of this fallen world (1
8 Cor 12:7-21).

9
10 10. We are convinced that a denial or neglect of these principles will lead to
11 increasingly destructive consequences in our families, our churches, and the culture at
12 large; and,

13
14 **Whereas**, the PCA General Assembly did at its 2019 General Assembly declared “the
15 Nashville Statement” as biblically faithful; and,

16
17 **Whereas**, Calvary Presbytery declared the Council on Biblical Manhood & Womanhood’s
18 "Danvers Statement" on biblical sexuality as a biblically faithful declaration;

19
20 **Therefore, be it further resolved** that the Calvary Presbytery asks the 53rd General
21 Assembly to declare the Council on Biblical Manhood & Womanhood’s "Danvers
22 Statement" as a biblically faithful declaration and refer the “Danvers Statement” to
23 the Committee on Discipleship Ministries for inclusion and promotion among its
24 denominational teaching materials.

25
26 **RECOMMENDED GROUNDS** (adapted from the Danvers Statement itself) adopted by
27 Calvary Presbytery for the PCA General Assembly:

28
29 We have been moved in our purpose by the following contemporary developments
30 which we observe with deep concern:

- 31
32 1. The widespread uncertainty and confusion in our culture regarding the
33 complementary differences between masculinity and femininity;
34
35 2. the tragic effects of this confusion in unraveling the fabric of marriage woven by
36 God out of the beautiful and diverse strands of manhood and womanhood;
37
38 3. the increasing promotion given to feminist egalitarianism with accompanying
39 distortions or neglect of the glad harmony portrayed in Scripture between the loving,
40 humble leadership of redeemed husbands and the intelligent, willing support of that
41 leadership by redeemed wives;
42
43 4. the widespread ambivalence regarding the values of motherhood, vocational
44 homemaking, and the many ministries historically performed by women;

- 1 5. the growing claims of legitimacy for sexual relationships which have Biblically and
- 2 historically been considered illicit or perverse, and the increase in pornographic
- 3 portrayal of human sexuality;
- 4
- 5 6. the upsurge of physical and emotional abuse in the family;
- 6
- 7 7. the emergence of roles for men and women in church leadership that do not conform
- 8 to Biblical teaching but backfire in the crippling of Biblically faithful witness;
- 9
- 10 8. the increasing prevalence and acceptance of hermeneutical oddities devised to
- 11 reinterpret apparently plain meanings of Biblical texts;
- 12
- 13 9. the consequent threat to Biblical authority as the clarity of Scripture is jeopardized
- 14 and the accessibility of its meaning to ordinary people is withdrawn into the restricted
- 15 realm of technical ingenuity;
- 16
- 17 10. and behind all this the apparent accommodation of some within the church to the
- 18 spirit of the age at the expense of winsome, radical Biblical authenticity which in the
- 19 power of the Holy Spirit may reform rather than reflect our ailing culture.
- 20

Further Rationale adopted by Calvary Presbytery for the PCA General Assembly:

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- 22 1. The Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) **already agrees** with the theological
- 23 commitments expressed in the Danvers Statement (formally titled "The Danvers
- 24 Statement on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood"). The PCA has not formally
- 25 adopted or "approved" the Danvers Statement as an official denominational document
- 26 (e.g., an overture to adopt it was declined by the General Assembly in 2009), but this
- 27 overture calls for a Declaration (as done in 2019 with the Nashville Statement) not a
- 28 technical or constitutional "adoption."
- 29
- 30 2. **It clearly articulates biblical complementarianism**—the view that men and
- 31 women are equal in personhood and value (both created in God's image, Gen. 1:26-
- 32 27) but distinct in roles, with male headship/leadership ordained by God in the home
- 33 and church as part of the created order (Gen. 2; 1 Cor. 11; 1 Tim. 2-3; Eph. 5). The
- 34 statement affirms that these distinctions are not cultural inventions but rooted in
- 35 creation before the Fall, and they echo the gospel (e.g., Christ's headship over the
- 36 church). This directly counters egalitarian interpretations that treat role distinctions as
- 37 merely cultural or post-Fall accommodations.
- 38
- 39 3. **It responds to contemporary threats to biblical teaching**—The Danvers
- 40 Statement was drafted in response to rising evangelical egalitarianism (e.g., arguments
- 41 for women in pastoral office and interchangeable roles in marriage) and secular
- 42 feminism influencing the church. Proponents argue that formally approving it would
- 43 help the PCA draw a clear line against creeping revisionism on gender roles, similar
- 44 to how the denomination commended the Nashville Statement (2019) as "biblically

1 faithful" in response to debates around sexuality and identity (e.g., Revoice
2 controversy).

3
4 **4. It reinforces the PCA's confessional commitments**—The PCA holds to the
5 *Westminster Standards*, which imply male headship in ordination (e.g., Larger
6 Catechism on family government and church office) and emphasize Scripture's
7 authority. The Danvers Statement is seen as a faithful, modern application/explanation
8 of those standards in areas the Westminster divines did not directly address (women's
9 ordination was not a live debate in the 1640s). Leaders like Ligon Duncan have
10 described such statements as "pastoral" and "confessional complementarianism,"
11 protecting the gospel witness by preserving the created pattern of complementarity.

12
13 **5. It promotes healthy, gospel-shaped relationships**—The statement explicitly
14 condemns distortions like male domination/abuse or female resistance to godly
15 leadership, calling husbands to sacrificial love and wives to willing submission (Eph.
16 5; Col. 3; 1 Pet. 3). Approving it would signal that complementarianism, rightly
17 understood, opposes authoritarianism and promotes mutual flourishing under Christ's
18 lordship.

19
20 **6. It provides unity and clarity in a divided evangelical landscape**—With ongoing
21 tensions in the PCA (and broader evangelicalism) over gender, sexuality, and cultural
22 accommodation, formal approval would strengthen the denomination's conservative,
23 Bible-centered identity, align it more explicitly with like-minded groups (e.g., many
24 Southern Baptists via CBMW), and serve as a teaching tool for officers, members, and
25 churches.

26
27 **7. This Overture is aimed at establishing a “first principle”** of our church by making
28 use of an approved action of a PCA General Assembly, namely that the PCA is
29 unambiguously and enthusiastically a complementarian denomination. It will do so by
30 declaring the Council on Biblical Manhood’s “Danvers Statement” which is the
31 preeminent theological statement on complementarianism used within the evangelical
32 and reformed world. In the same way the PCA affirmed the Nashville Statement
33 declaration Calvary Presbytery is recommending to the PCA that the PCA would be
34 strengthened and unified by approving this useful, theologically faithful “Danvers
35 Statement.”

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38 *Unanimously adopted by Calvary Presbytery at its stated meeting of February 7, 2026*
39 *Attested by /s/ RE Melton L. Duncan, Stated Clerk*