



NAPERVILLE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Naperville Presbyterian Church Statement

Concerning: Employment Dispute of Emily Hyland

May 6, 2026

This statement is offered to clear up a number of inaccuracies abroad in the matter of Hyland v. Naperville Presbyterian Church currently before the Illinois Human Rights Commission (IHRC).

Dane Ortlund became senior pastor at Naperville Presbyterian Church in October 2020 and initiated a routine assessment of the church staff. As part of that assessment, he raised concerns about performance issues with Emily Hyland, the church's part-time director of operations.

Pastor Ortlund presented these performance concerns to Ms. Hyland in January 2021 and asked her to revisit the conversation in March. In early March, Ms. Hyland complained to two elders, though she made no mention of sex-based discrimination—a complaint she would later make to the Chicago Metro Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in America and to state agencies.

Seeing no improvement in her performance—or even an indication of willingness to acknowledge any performance issues—Ms. Hyland was terminated March 19, 2021. The congregation was not made aware of her dismissal and Ms. Hyland was invited to continue worshiping at the church. In subsequent months, she filed various employment complaints with the Chicago Metro Presbytery, which has ecclesial jurisdiction over our church, and several state agencies. Throughout, the church respected the process and chose not to respond to multiple misstatements in the press.

The Chicago Metro Presbytery, to whom NPC is accountable ecclesially, conducted a nine-month investigation and concluded there was insufficient merit to the allegations to warrant a trial, thus clearing the church's leadership due to lack of evidence. That report includes independent testimony from other female staff at the church who reported an improved office environment in the wake of Ms. Hyland's dismissal.

With the state of Illinois, Ms. Hyland filed 24 complaints including charges such as sex-based discrimination, unequal pay based on her sex, termination motivated by her sex, objections to being called "sister," and retaliation. Following an investigation by the Illinois Department of Human Rights, 13 of those allegations were dismissed. The remaining 11 allegations were tried in a December 2024 civil trial before an administrative law judge of the IHRC. On May 1, 2026, the IHRC issued a recommendation in the matter. The judge found in favor of the church, dismissing 10 of those 11 remaining counts (including all of the sex discrimination and gender-based pay discrimination counts), and found in favor of Ms. Hyland only on her retaliation claim.

The church disagrees that its actions were retaliatory, due, among other reasons, to multiple attempts offered over an extended period of time to help Ms. Hyland see and address her

performance issues. These performance issues are reflected in part by the fact that multiple female staff testified at the trial to being mistreated by Ms. Hyland.

The church is grateful for the decisive findings that of the original 24 allegations, 23 were denied—13 as a result of the initial investigation, and 10 at the hearing. Our elders are meeting to determine what next steps make sense in service of the truth with respect to the one remaining charge. In the meantime, we have been praying and will continue to pray for Ms. Hyland's blessing, and that our church can return to devoting its time and energy to the work of the gospel.

Finally, the elders affirm their support for Senior Pastor Dane Ortlund and commend him for his godly leadership, especially during this season. He has treated Ms. Hyland with dignity and respect, acted in consultation with other elders, and has sought the heart and mind of Christ above all.