

Date: February 6, 2007
To: The Brothers and Sisters of the Greater Las Vegas Church of Christ
From: The Church Leadership
Re: Response to Daniel & Deenie Triana's actions

To our dear brothers and sister in the Greater Las Vegas Church of Christ (GLVCC),

We, the leadership of GLVCC, previously wrote you a letter regarding the actions of Daniel and Deenie Triana. We would like to take this opportunity to explain to you, in detail, what has taken place since the release of that letter.

As stated in that letter, members of our leadership team met with Daniel on January 8, 2007, and we talked about the divisiveness of his plan to build churches where they already exist. A day earlier, the Portland International Church of Christ (PICOC) website posted that the Trianas were starting a new church here in Las Vegas. Once he confirmed this intention on starting a new church, he received his first warning of divisiveness and the severe consequences that would follow. Both sides mutually agreed that at no time will his church try to persuade members of the GLVCC to attend their services. Should these actions ensue, as the shepherds of the GLVCC, it would be our responsibility to strengthen and unify the disciples in our congregation by the most effective means afforded in the Bible.

Unfortunately, we have been informed of several instances where members of the Triana's splinter group have actively tried to persuade the members of GLVCC to attend their services. This is in direct violation of the Scriptures and the mutually agreed upon decision to desist from the building of additional churches in the region. Furthermore, this new church is supported by and affiliated with Kip McKean and his new International Christian Church movement. Thus, we feel obliged to inform you of Kip's patterns and standing with our worldwide fellowship in order for you to have a full understanding of the withdrawal of fellowship we are calling for today in this letter.

First, since 2005, Kip and the PICOC have actively campaigned to start new churches where there are existing congregations of our fellowship. At the 2005 Portland Jubilee, Kip made the following declaration: "In the Fall the Portland leadership will begin to seek out church leaderships in congregations that are struggling to ask if we can help them build a foundation of sold-out disciples. If they are not inclined to receive help, then we will offer help to any group that would prefer to be in a new congregation composed of only sold-out disciples. To the casual observer, this may look like 'two churches in one city' yet, in time it will be obvious who has God's approval." We would like to inform you that the GLVCC was never approached by Kip McKean or anyone from his congregation to "help" us, thereby contradicting his own stated purpose.

Second, in an article written on July 23, 2006 entitled 'Proclamation' Kip wrote, "Dying churches either must heed the words of Christ and repent, like Santiago, or new congregations must be planted to obey Jesus' charge to 'baptize the nations.'" According to this statement, their church would plant new churches where he identifies dying churches. (Ironically, the Santiago church has since withdrawn its support of Kip's movement). Again, this shows he has assumed such authority to justify his cause.

Third, on October 15, 2006 in an article entitled, 'Partners in the Gospel', he wrote, "From a historical perspective, if one has a conviction that you should never start a

new church, then he or she should attend the Roman Catholic Church as it is the most direct link to the first century church. But we believe many ICOC congregations have drifted in 'life and doctrine' to such an extent that it is time for a revolution of starting new churches composed of only sold-out disciples." These types of troublesome statements do nothing to build the unity God calls for in the Bible, but rather rely upon Kip's personal definition of a "sold out disciple" to validate his actions.

Fourth, Kip is clearly advocating division within our family of churches and firmly believes that our lives do not match what we preach. His words contradict his own long standing teaching of one church in one city. After all, why else should a new church be planted here, if they believe us to be disciples of Christ teaching the same doctrine? Keep in mind, Paul never sent a second church into a city regardless of the spiritual condition of that congregation. Despite all its sins, the church in Corinth was addressed by Paul as *"the church of God in Corinth"* (1 Corinthians 1:2). Nowhere in the Bible is there precedence of "re-planting" another congregation if a church isn't doing well, which is what Kip is doing and advocating.

Conversely, the Bible calls for the body of believers to be unified. In 1 Corinthians 1:10, Paul writes to the church in Corinth, "I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be **no divisions among you** and that you may be **perfectly united in mind and thought.**" And he continues in Ephesians 4:3, God commands us to, "**Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.**"

Kip's words and actions do not promote unity, but rather division. To date, 20 splinter groups, including Las Vegas, have been planted through Kip's leadership. This very action causes division and is condemned in the Bible. Yet, to justify his actions, Kip often compares himself to Paul using the instance that he and Barnabas had a disagreement. Paul and Barnabas are two individuals and not an individual disagreeing with a congregation, but the passage to which he refers is taken out of context:

'They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, but Paul chose Silas and left, **commended by the brothers** to the grace of the Lord.' Acts 15:39-40

Paul was commended by the brothers even after this incident. Though some of us feel indebted to Kip for his service for God in the past, in recent years Kip has been repeatedly confronted and corrected by respected leaders and elders from around the world for his divisive behavior. As a matter of fact, on October 14, 2005, 65 of the most reputable leaders of the ICOC, who were close to Kip wrote him and warned him of his divisive actions and asked him to repent. In reply, they received a letter signed by the collective leadership of the PICOC defending Kip. He refused to personally respond to or acknowledge the charges against him. Thus, on November 2, 2005, the brothers reached consensus to mark and withdraw fellowship from him.

Furthermore, on Friday, February 2, 2007, after much prayer, Bible study and advice from many respected leaders from other congregations such as Bruce Williams, Al Baird, Gordon Ferguson, John Causey, Joe Fields and Roger Lamb, members of our leadership team contacted Daniel Triana for a second and last time. He was warned of being disfellowshipped if he continues with this divisive association with Kip McKean and his movement. We reminded him of Romans 16:17 which declares, "I urge you,

brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. **Keep away from them.**” Also, Titus 3:9-11 commands us,

“But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless. Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, **have nothing to do with him.** You may be sure that such a man is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.”

Unfortunately, we are sad to report that the Triana’s have not changed their mind or amended their decision in the spirit of repentance. Instead, they have carried on their plans to hold an inaugural service of their church in Las Vegas, with Kip McKean as their guest speaker. **Consequently, in obedience to the Scriptures, with great sadness and grieving hearts we are forced to withdraw our fellowship from Kip McKean, Daniel and Deenie Triana, and anyone else who promotes the formation of new churches. Such actions can only be interpreted as intentional divisiveness.**

1. We expect the members of GLVCC to avoid all contact with these individuals: ‘Keep away from them’ (Romans 16:17) and ‘Have nothing to do with’ them (Titus 3:10).

2. We advise you that spending time with these divisive individuals and visiting their congregations will incur similar censure on any and all who support division and ask you to remember 1Corinthians 15:33, ‘Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."’

3. We must avoid gossip, slander, rumors and controversies. Such actions will not be tolerated and will be dealt with swiftly.

As your shepherds, the goal of the actions we are taking today is to protect the members of GLVCC and to hope that these individuals may, through repentance, obey the Scriptures in honoring both the spirit and letter of the law.

Finally, we are convinced that God has been working powerfully in the GLVCC in the last year. Spiritual and numeric growth, appointment of elders and healthier leadership dynamics are just a few of the great things God has done among us. We believe greater things are in store for GLVCC in 2007 as we look *through the eyes of faith*. Let us be completely unified with the church leadership and one another as we remain focused on the race ahead to win Las Vegas for Christ and to see Jesus in each other more and more each day. Let us strive to be give God glory individually and collectively.

With much love,

James Counts, Lead Evangelist
Behzad Fathi, Evangelist
Ernest Govan, Elder
Dennis Matzel, Elder