Dear members of the Sub-executive of Toronto Conference:

I am writing to urge you to *not* accept the recommendation of the Conference Review Committee that you request the General Council to hold a Formal Hearing in order to determine whether Gretta Vosper's name should be placed on the Discontinued Service List.

After following the course of events for the past year and a half, and after carefully reading the report of the Review Committee and other relevant materials, I'm convinced that the Sub-executive is faced with a decision that could substantially alter the future of The United Church of Canada, in addition to damaging the life of one of its more capable and committed ministers.

Gretta has proved herself committed to the principles the United Church has stood for over the course of its history: an educated ministry, freedom of thought, compassion for those who suffer, and social justice. Whatever Gretta has said about the person of Jesus, I suspect he would recognize her as a true follower and therefore deserving of the title "Christian", even if she doesn't claim that title for herself.

The decision facing you is whether to facilitate an unprecedented step, that of putting one of our ministers on trial for pushing the boundaries of theological thought. I trust you will ponder deeply the consequences of your decision and ask yourselves how many ministers within our Church could honestly reaffirm their vows for ordination, commissioning, or admission without the benefit of the "in essential agreement" provision, a provision that for 91 years has provided ministers with some leeway for theological interpretation and personal integrity.

This destructive and unjust process could stop here, if you were willing to do what is necessary to stop it. I respectfully ask you to do just that.

Rev. Bill Wall (retired)
Executive secretary of Saskatchewan Conference, 1985 - 2000.