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A Monthly Publication of the Christian Law Association

THE **LEGAL** ALERT

Peace
in
Crisis

FRIENDSHIPS

WITH

POLITICIANS



When considering the best way to engage your community and the world for the Gospel of Christ, have you ever considered the role of friendship with your local, state, and federal politicians could play in that engagement? We want to encourage you to consider the following steps you might take to build a friendship with your mayor, your state representatives, and your U.S. senators and representatives.

First, if you don't know whom your representatives are in each of these categories, one simple tool you can use to identify your elected officials is through www.usa.gov/elected-officials. This website will help you locate your federal, state, and local elected officials.

Next, identify with whom you want to start building a friendship. With the corona-virus pandemic, we've seen the important role mayors play in making decisions that effect churches and faith-based ministries. The decisions made by mayors often times either allowed for the government and churches to both work toward serving a hurting world or they infringed on religious liberties and overreached their Constitutional boundaries. Having the ear of your mayor and advocating for churches can make a tremendous difference.

Here are some concrete ideas and initiatives you should consider on how you can build friendships with your representatives:

1. Call their office and set up an appointment to meet with them face-to-face. Know that they have limited time, so be strategic with your care, concern, and prayers offered during the meeting. Be sure to take a moment and share your faith with them as well. Send a thank you note after the meeting.
2. Invite them to a service or prayer meeting at your church. Offer to have the congregation pray over them during the service.
3. Regularly email or write them and let them know that you and your congregation are praying for their protection, for their family's protection, and for them to have wisdom and fortitude as they face the challenges of governing and leading in your state and nation.



4. Host a special prayer service on the eve or day of their inauguration or re-election and invite them to attend as the special guest.
5. Make yourself available and be a resource to your politician on religious liberty issues and other matters that are important to your church and the evangelical community.
6. Don't overlook your representative's staff. Many times staffers accomplish much of the politician's agenda. Offer your support, encouragement, and prayer to them too.
7. Once you've developed a friendship with your local, state, or federal political leader, stay in contact. Show up at events important to them and show your support and solidarity.
8. Consider inviting them to events at your church like your Easter passion play or 4th of July celebration.
9. A solid relationship with your local representatives can be a fantastic asset should your ministry ever come under legal fire. Any politician will be much more willing to aid someone with whom they already have an established relationship.

We hope that you will prayerfully consider how the Lord is leading you to forge friendships with your leaders in pursuit of furthering the Gospel and His Kingdom.



Ministering to the At-Risk Population

Even as churches begin to reopen their doors to in-person services, it is vital to understand that there are those, particularly the elderly, infirm, and immuno-compromised, that should continue to remain home for the time being. That does not, however, remove their need for spiritual food and fellowship. So how can your church continue to minister to this community?

- Pastors - consider providing one-on-one spiritual counseling. Find the time to feed those who can't be there to hear the Word preached.
- Set up calendars to have staff and volunteers reach out to each and every person on a weekly basis - sometimes just talking can be an immense help.
- Have they been able to access your ministry's streaming services? Consider ways to fund, provide, and set up access for those who do not have it.
- Do they have any needs? Utilize ministry volunteers to pick up groceries or other items needed by the individual. The Bible is clear that we have a duty to be there for the "least of us". Let the church ensure we continue to be lights for them during this darkness.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

Psalm 46:1

|| The Great Commission Continues ||

Pandemic or no, Jesus Christ's command to preach the gospel to every creature remains just as important today as it was four months ago. In fact, the truth is that people need Jesus' saving grace and peace more than ever.

This pandemic has cut people off from friends, family, community, mental health treatment, and more. Make no mistake - there will be dire consequences. A federal emergency hotline for people in emotional distress registered over 1000% more calls this April than it did in April of last year. Projected models are showing that, as the unemployment rate continues to rise, the suicide rate is going to skyrocket.



What does this tell us? It tells us what we already knew: people need the Lord. Let's make sure that every one of us is doing our part to share the Good News - that Jesus Christ died for their sins.



Perfect Peace

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2 Timothy 3:1

With the unrest happening across the nation, remember the words from Scripture mentioned above.

We have been quarantined, social-distanced, masked, and sanitized. Along with restlessness, many have experienced anxiety due to unanswered questions.

When will things get back to normal?

Will things ever get back to normal?

Be reminded, and be encouraged:

(Isaiah 26:3) “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.”

Our Heavenly Father provides peace for His children, but not just peace. “Perfect peace.”

So, how does a child of God succeed in experiencing this “Perfect peace” with all of the chaos around us?

When pandemics happen and when crises occur may I encourage you to keep your mind stayed on the Lord. Fix your mind on Him. Focus your mind on Him.

(II Corinthians 10:5)

“Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;”

And then, trust Him. He created the universe, and He manages it, too.

Is the Coronavirus more complex than that? The answer is no. Not even close.

In the 1800s, a lady by the name of Frances Havergal wrote some beautiful songs that you will find in your church hymnbook.

Frances Havergal didn't live a long life. She died at 43 years of age, but she lived long enough to write these words:

**Like a river glorious
Is God's perfect peace,
Over all victorious
In its bright increase.
Perfect, yet it floweth
Fuller every day,
Perfect, yet it groweth
Deeper all the way.
Stayed upon Jehovah,
Hearts are fully blest,
Finding as He promised,
Perfect peace and rest.**

When will things get back to normal?

Will things ever get back to normal?

Not sure. But, I am sure of this. Your Heavenly Father wants you to enjoy PERFECT PEACE. So, keep your mind stayed on Him, and trust Him.



PRAYER CHECKLIST

Please Note:

Prayer requests listed are a limited glimpse of the many ongoing cases handled by CLA.

- ✓ We PRAISE that the Lord gave us great First Amendment victories including **NORTH CAROLINA** and **MASSACHUSETTS** last month. We also thank each of you who have prayed and supported us in these endeavors. Please continue to pray for the cases currently pending in many other states and the pastors taking a stand for the Lord.
- ✓ Pray for a Christian in **CALIFORNIA** whose workplace is making stricter Covid guidelines that will make it where she cannot attend in-person church services. If she chooses to attend church, even with the safety precautions, she will lose her employment.
- ✓ PRAISE the Lord! You prayed with us for a church in **ILLINOIS** who had difficulty with meeting the requirements to get their building to be ADA compliant. They are now able to continue to serve the Lord with their facility.
- ✓ Please remember churches across **AMERICA** as they are dealing with issues never before seen in our nation. Whether your church building never closed, recently opened, or anticipates reopening soon, your pastor is preparing for ways to reduce liabilities and CLA is here to help with legal risks. Please pray for safety and wisdom for pastors and they endeavor to reach the world for Christ during these unprecedented times.
- ✓ Pray for a ministry in **MARYLAND** that assists the homeless as they implement new procedures during this pandemic as they must remain open for the souls that need their assistance.
- ✓ Pray for a pastor in **CALIFORNIA** as our attorneys assisted him with guidelines for bookkeeping including proper income reporting, record keeping and housing allowance designation.
- ✓ Please pray for churches in **AMERICA** as many ministries begin to resume meeting in person. There is a growing concern about many new liability issues that have arisen due to the coronavirus pandemic. Churches and ministries are facing potential liability and lawsuits from individuals claiming to have contracted the disease while being on the property. There are proposed bills SB 308 and HB 606 which would add immunity to churches and faith-based organizations as well as for-profit businesses. Please pray as we work to help churches and ministries stay protected.
- ✓ Pray for a Christian father in **OHIO** who our attorneys are assisting in learning the proper steps to legally homeschool his children. With the schools closed for the pandemic, the ability to educate children at home with a Christian education is becoming more important than ever.
- ✓ Pray for a church in **NEW YORK** that has questions on updating their church files and following their bylaws, after their pastor unexpectedly went to be with the Lord.
- ✓ Pray for a ministry in **OKLAHOMA** and many other states, that our attorneys are assisting in making sure the laws in their state are followed regarding salaries being properly implemented.
- ✓ Pray for a Christian in **FLORIDA** who needs assistance in understanding how to properly start a ministry that would predominately serve online. There are many new privacy clause issues that need to be addressed.
- ✓ Please pray for our **GOVERNMENT LEADERS** during this COVID-19 crisis and the riots. Ask God to grant them wisdom as they wade through these uncharted waters.
- ✓ Pray for a Pastor in **IDAHO** as our attorneys advise him regarding his state laws on service animals and the added precautions needed for allowing them into the sanctuary with new sanitation guidelines as well.