

Position on Political Involvement Anthem Hayden Church

We believe God has called us as individuals and as a church to love all the people around us with the same passionate, unconditional love that we have received from our Father, regardless of their current relationship with God, who they are, what choices they have made, where they came from, or what they currently believe. Every human being is made in the image of God and is affectionately loved by Him, and worthy of being treated with dignity and respect on that basis. We aspire to use any reasonable means necessary to clearly, faithfully, and creatively communicate the Good News of Jesus so that we might save some. Our salvation compels us to be involved in the lives of our neighbors, work associates, schools, communities, and society. Among the many ways our love may be exercised is through political involvement. We recognize that every believer has a responsibility to be involved in the political processes of our community to the degree and in the manner they believe to be exemplary of the love our Lord has called us to and has given us.

As leaders of Anthem Hayden Church, we feel that our role is not to dictate, predict, or direct involvement in the political process but rather to equip the believers of this body to engage in that process if they wish from a strong foundation of biblical truth combined with the leading of the Holy Spirit. As spirit-empowered believers, we must enter political involvement in the same manner that Jesus came from the Father: full of grace and truth. We are called to be champions both of truth and grace. Living out Biblical truth goes beyond doctrinal affirmation; it is characteristically relational and loving in nature. In other words, the truth is profoundly compromised and distorted if merely presented rather than lived, if its presentation is not motivated by love, or if it is not presented lovingly. Similarly, love is compromised and distorted if it is not expressed in ways consistent with truth. We must exercise courage when the Spirit gently prompts us to speak up, and temperance when He inwardly pleads with us to remain silent. We cultivate spiritual maturity in order to truly know what it looks like in daily practice to speak the truth in love.

We also acknowledge that mature, Spirit-filled believers are going to disagree on the strategy and priorities of any given political organization, action, legislation, or candidate. Recognizing this, **Anthem Hayden Church will not endorse any political organization, action, demonstration, legislation, ballot measure, or candidate and we shall lovingly but firmly protect the freedom, safety, and a feeling of welcome for those within our fold to maintain and express their own individual political opinions from across the spectrum, regardless of whether they are shared by a majority of, a minority of, or any of the others in our fold.** We do a disservice to someone when we allow them to persist in the belief that their political opinions are prerequisites to a relationship with Jesus or that their political recommendations are clear requirements for one to live out the gospel, and we do harm to our witness and to the people in our midst when we enable those who pressure them in any way, big or small. Instead, our intention is to teach biblical principles that will enable each member of our body to think through the issues biblically for themselves in such a way that they can come to their own conclusions, and to encourage members to cultivate and follow their convictions as they consider, rationally and kindly discuss, and sincerely pray over any political issue that God may have laid on their heart. They then will be able to engage in dialogue with others based on the kind of love and humble respect we owe one another as siblings in Christ.

As disciples of Jesus, it is critical for us to remember that our identity is rooted in the person and work of Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Our full allegiance belongs to Him, and as such our citizenship is first and foremost heavenly. The kind of loyalty Jesus requires of us is mutually exclusive with loyalty to any tribe, tongue, people, or nation, as they are all ultimately subject to His authority. Any political convictions or actions we hold or choose to engage in, while they may be beneficial, cannot ever be confused or conflated with orthodox Christian doctrine or practice or be made to seem instrumental or in any way prerequisite for an authentic relationship with Christ. Our commission to “go and make disciples” demands something categorically distinct and far nobler than political involvement: we must

seek and save the lost. Political involvement can support this mission, and this mission may at times even call us to promote political actions or dismantle political power structures that oppress “the least of these,” but political beliefs and activity must never subvert our or others’ advancement of the Great Commission or lead us to break fellowship with other Christians with whom we may sincerely disagree. An important question to ask oneself is “Does my political involvement exhibit the fruit of the Spirit or the flesh?” We have erred when our political involvement comes at the cost of our witness.

On the basis of this position, we will not give announcements, place inserts in the bulletin, distribute literature, or authorize leafletting in the parking lot for any political organization, candidate, or legislation.

The foundation for this policy is found throughout the Scriptures, including, but not limited to, the following passages of Scripture: Luke 20:25, Romans 13:1-7, Acts 4:18-20, Acts 5:19-29, 1 Peter 2:13-19, Philippians 3:20, Matthew 28:16-20, and Matthew 22:39.

Approved by the Elders, 2021

The Council of Elders reserves the right to determine whether a circumstance warrants exception. In situations when government may be intruding into areas that properly belong to the church (such as requiring the church to do something that violates Scripture or prohibiting the church from doing something required by Scripture) the elders would review the relevant particulars of the situation in light of Scripture.