

Mission Hills Church Position on Politics

October 2019

There are few things more divisive in our culture than that of politics. We live at a time in which affiliation with a political party and affirmation of particular politicians or policies define both individual and group identities. Consequently, we are mindful that holding a public position on politics as a church can quickly be interpreted as a commitment to a particular party, politician or set of policies. Therefore, it is important that we state up front our fundamental calling as a church. Mission Hills Church is a church family called in love to share in and be shaped by Christ our hope. We believe those who attend Mission Hills Church are in need of the gospel. Consequently, we are articulating a public position on politics to clarify both our calling as a church and to distinguish a gospel shaped view of political engagement.

Mission Hills Church believes that our ultimate allegiance is to Christ alone as our Lord and Savior. Consequently, we believe our ultimate citizenship is in Christ's kingdom (Philippians 3:20-21), that was inaugurated in his life, death, resurrection & ascension, and will be consummated in his second coming. We believe there are two primary kingdoms: the kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness (Colossians 1:3-14), and we believe these kingdoms are in conflict. The kingdom of God is ruled by Jesus Christ and is composed of believers from every tribe, tongue, and nation. The kingdom of darkness is ruled by Satan, who is called the 'god of this world' (2 Corinthians 4:4). God's kingdom is not to be identified with any particular ethnic group, nation, or political body (John 18:36), but rather can only be properly identified as the church (1 Peter 2:9-10). Indeed, the only Christian "nation" is the church.

Because of our fundamental commitment to Christ and his kingdom, it is not our formal or regular practice to endorse political parties, candidates, propositions, or ballot measures. This would be a confusion of the kingdom to which we belong; it would suggest that God's kingdom could be identified with a particular candidate, party, proposition, or ballot measure. That being said, the elders of Mission Hills Church strongly encourage church members to prayerfully participate in the politics of our day as believers guided by biblical truth.

The elders of Mission Hills Church may, on occasion where an extreme violation of Christian conscience is proposed, endorse or support a political position, but this would only be an act consistent with our ambassadorial role as agents of Christ and his kingdom (2 Corinthians 5:18-20). Yet this will not be our ordinary practice, as we are called to respect the conscience and freedom of every believer for whom Christ died and rose (Romans 14:1-23). Our commitment as elders is rather to preserve and protect our unity in Christ, not to pursue or enforce uniformity, politically or otherwise (Ephesians 4:1-6).

It is also a commitment of ours to disciple the minds and hearts of Christians in every aspect of their lives, which includes their political aspects. We are committed to training followers of Jesus to engage with wisdom the "kingdom of this world" so as to be persuasive ambassadors of Christ and his kingdom. This will mean that we will provide regular opportunities for the formation of the Christian mind and heart to think wisely about

political matters and how the kingdom of Christ intersects with the kingdoms of this world, most particularly our country of residence, the United States of America. We will train our people to be good and faithful citizens, to respect and pray for our ruling authorities, and to serve the community and nation in all ways consistent with Christian conviction (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:17; 1 Timothy 2:1-3). We will also train them to be a faithful witness of Christ and his kingdom, and to courageously, truthfully, and compassionately persuade people to give their allegiance to Christ and his kingdom.

We also strongly encourage our church, as faithful citizens of our nation, state, county, and city to use their constitutionally protected rights to freedom of speech, voting, assembly, and others such rights as ambassadors of Christ and his kingdom. We recognize these rights are constitutionally protected, but our freedom to speak, or assemble, or otherwise, is not ultimately granted by the United States Constitution, but by Christ himself. And so, we will faithfully proclaim the gospel of his kingdom whether it is a “legal” right or not, our freedom is guaranteed not by any governing body in this world, but by Christ himself (Galatians 5:1).

As the elders of the church, we believe that nations will come and nations will go, but the kingdom of Christ will endure forever, thus our unwavering allegiance will be to Christ and his kingdom, and we will call our people to place their ultimate allegiance in Christ and his kingdom. Soli Deo Gloria!