

## The Elders of Blackhawk Church Statement Regarding "Politics and Blackhawk"

October 2008

Politics is a hot topic! As people who are committed to following Christ it is only natural that we passionately desire that our country move in a God-honoring direction. Thus, we are often faced with the question: "Why does Blackhawk Church not promote one political perspective or candidate over others?" That is an excellent question - one that strikes to the core of both who we are as a local congregation and how we should relate to our community. We hope that this article is being read by Libertarians, Democrats, Republicans, and Greens, and that you each feel welcome at Blackhawk.

Our refusal to take positions on political issues and candidates is not because we are trying to avoid moral issues about which the Bible speaks. Our goal will always be to teach what the Bible says about principles of morality and justice. However, applying those principles in a fallen world often involves compromises and political trade-offs about which reasonable Christ-followers can differ. The primary reason why Blackhawk does not get involved in politics concerns the more fundamental issue of how we as a local congregation should interact with our culture and society as a whole.

We believe that God's *primary* agent of redemption in the world today is the church - not politicians or theologians or reformers, and not governments. God is using local congregations to reach people with the good news of redemption through Jesus Christ. Accordingly, we see the church's role as announcing and living out the Kingdom of God, rather than promoting politicians or legislation.

Well-intentioned Christ-followers have historically disagreed on exactly how the church should interact with culture as God's primary agent of redemption. We believe that in our particular context (Madison/Wisconsin/USA today) we should relate to our surrounding culture as a mission field, not a battlefield. We desire to *influence* our culture, not to *battle* it. As a "Missional" church we see others as people created by God and in need of God, not as the opposition. We should seek the welfare of our city and intercede prayerfully on its behalf (Jer. 29:7). This is our city and these are our neighbors.

Reasonable, Bible-believing Christ followers can disagree about both theological issues and political issues. As a local congregation, we will continue to affirm whatever reasonable, Bible-believing Christians cannot deny. As a church, however, we will not take a position on political issues or matters of legislation about which Christians can reasonably disagree. Jesus prayed that all Christ-followers "may be one" so that the world may believe the gospel (John 17:22-23). Politics divides; the gospel unites.

The truths of scripture are timeless and we will continue to explore how current societal issues are impacted by these timeless truths. We will encourage people to become informed and then to vote, but we won't tell them *how* to vote. We will encourage people to become politically active because this is our city and these are our neighbors and we should all be working to make it a better place. Let us be united behind the timeless truths of the Bible, and let us be welcoming of our brothers and sisters who in good faith apply those truths differently.