

Church Family,

It is once again voting season. What a privilege it is to live in a free republic where we have the opportunity to participate in—and even be part of—the processes that govern our nation!

There is something worth considering as we navigate these seasons together. Over the last several decades in America, Christianity and politics have become increasingly intertwined. Political platforms may include positions that align with deeply held biblical convictions, and those convictions matter. But we must be careful not to assume that agreement on certain issues makes an entire political platform or candidate the Christian choice.

We also need to guard against allowing politics to disciple us and then looking to Scripture to support conclusions we've already reached. It must work the other way around. **God's Word forms us first.** Scripture shapes our convictions, our character, our priorities, and our conscience. We then carry those things with us into every area of life, including the voting booth.

Our allegiance belongs to Jesus. No political party, candidate, or government can claim ownership of His Kingdom, and no election can change who He is or what He has called His Church to do.

That brings me to something about how we approach these matters at Friends Church.

From time to time, particularly during election seasons, we receive requests to share voter guides, promote campaigns, or encourage participation in various political efforts. While we believe it is important for Christians to be engaged and responsible citizens, we've chosen to be intentional about what we take on and promote as a church, rather than becoming involved in organizing political activities.

That decision is rooted in something much bigger than politics. We want to remain faithful to the particular mission God has given Friends Church and steward well the people, resources, and opportunities He has entrusted to us.

Our responsibility is to faithfully preach and teach God's Word and help make disciples whose entire lives are shaped by it. We want Scripture to inform our convictions, shape our consciences, and give us

wisdom to faithfully navigate the world in which God has placed us.

For that reason, **we don't distribute voter guides, organize call-or-write campaigns, or take on political mobilization efforts through Friends Church.** This doesn't mean we believe Christians should disengage from public life. Rather, we want to equip people to follow Jesus faithfully wherever He has placed them, including in the responsibilities and opportunities they have as citizens.



So, as we approach another election, I want to encourage us in three simple ways.

1 Pray, pray, and pray some more.

James 5:16 reminds us that “the prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.” Prayer isn't our last resort; it is the way forward as we faithfully live in this particular moment in history. Pray for our nation. Pray for those who lead. Pray for wisdom and discernment. Pray for one another.

Paul gives us this specific instruction in 1 Timothy 2:1-2:

“I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.”

So as we approach this election, let's be people who pray—for those currently leading us, for those who will lead us, and for the people and nation they have been entrusted to serve.

2 Get out and vote.

Romans 13:1 tells us, “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established.” Paul wrote those words during the reign of the Roman emperor Nero. Christians were called to live faithfully under the governing authorities, even when those authorities did not share their faith.

That remains true for us. Our faithfulness to Jesus is not dependent upon living in a nation where we get to vote. Christians throughout history and around the world have faithfully followed Jesus under many different forms of government.

But what a privilege that **we do get to vote!** We live in a nation where its citizens have a voice in

choosing those who govern and in the decisions that shape our communities. Whether you vote in person or by absentee ballot, we encourage you to be informed, take seriously the opportunity you've been given, and participate.

3 Trust the Lord in all of it.

God has been working through all kinds of governments and rulers throughout history to accomplish His purposes. He is not surprised by an election result, and His purposes are not dependent upon one. We can trust Him even when what we see around us causes us concern or when circumstances don't unfold the way we hoped. He is faithful, and He will accomplish His purposes. (Proverbs 3:5-8)



As citizens of heaven who have also been given the privilege of citizenship in the United States, we have an opportunity to live out our faith in every area of life, including how we engage as citizens. We will continue pointing one another to Jesus and opening God's Word together, trusting the Holy Spirit to shape how we live.

Whatever happens in an election, **our God will not be moved, and we will not be moved.** Our calling remains the same: love God, love people, and faithfully follow Jesus until the whole valley knows.

Your Friends Church Leadership Team