The Pulpit and Political Activism

As the political fervor is building toward the elections in November, there are many who ask me my personal opinions about different candidates or my political insights or views. My answers tend to frustrate, for while I do have definite opinions, I realize as a Pastor people will often weigh my words heavily and count my opinions as sufficient to influence their own. I want people to have their views and actions informed by God’s opinion, not mine. So I tend to give vague answers that transcend the details of candidates and platforms, or that dig at the un biblical reasons why we like certain candidates, or hold certain views, all while hoping to provide biblical guardrails on the pathway of a Christian world and life view. It’s not that I’m afraid to give my opinions, I just know that my opinions are feeble and fallible compared to the riches and unchanging truth of God’s Word. I don’t want to hand out a voter guide based on my opinion, I don’t even tell my own children how to vote, but I have taught them the biblical criteria of evaluating candidates and understanding the principals behind their platforms.

Some people have been confused by my lack of comment on political issues and candidates and assume either I’m trying to hide my personal views because they differ from theirs, or that I’m afraid to speak my mind in fear of legal or tax issues. Let me be clear, there is no law on the books or tax code wielded by the IRS that could ever keep me from preaching the truth of God’s words with boldness and clarity. I once had someone ask me how difficult it was to prepare sermons knowing that I was under an IRS gag order (He was referring to the 1954 resolution aimed at amending IRS tax code, section 501, headed by then Senator LBJ), hence earning the name the Johnson amendment in which this was added to the tax code regulating non-profit organizations.

Deny tax-exempt status to only those people who influence legislation, but also those who give in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate or any public issue.

This is a restriction aimed specifically at pulpit preaching, mostly because of, the outcry from many pulpits when it was found out that LBJ had won his Senate seat through election fraud (earning the nick name Land slide Lyndon – he won by 87 votes - and it was proven that hundreds, if not thousands of his votes were fraudulent), but was able to work the courts through injunctions and other back room dealings to keep, not only his, but his standing as a senator, but his standing as a front runner, six years later, as a candidate for the Vice Presidency (see below). While I believe this amendment is wrong and reflects a movement away from our Founding Father’s appreciation for and protection of religious organizations, specifically, the church, I know it doesn’t effect me at all. I preach what the Word says. I don’t use the pulpit to rally political capital, or to influence any political opinion on behalf of any candidate or any public issue. My prayer is that I would be part of the answer to J. Gresham Machen’s prayer (a professor at Princeton who became the founder of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and Westminster Seminary):

"Wise pastors prompt [Christians] to form associations outside the church, and leave the church to its central task from which so many blessings flow. That pattern in the 18th and 19th centuries worked exceptionally well. New England pastors in colonial times preached and taught what the Bible said about liberty, and the Sons of Liberty — not a subset of any particular church — effectively sponsored a tea party in Boston harbor. Pastors through America during those centuries preached about biblical poverty fighting, and in city after city Christians formed profit organizations specifically to work the courts through injunctions and other back room dealings to keep, not only their church, but their standing as a senator, but their standing as a front runner, six years later, as a candidate for the Vice Presidency."

As the political fervor is building toward the elections in November, there are many who ask me my personal opinions about different candidates or my political insights or views. My answers tend to frustrate, for while I do have definite opinions, I realize as a Pastor people will often weigh my words heavily and count my opinions as sufficient to influence their own. I want people to have their views and actions informed by God’s opinion, not mine. So I tend to give vague answers that transcend the details of candidates and platforms, or that dig at the un biblical reasons why we like certain candidates, or hold certain views, all while hoping to provide biblical guardrails on the pathway of a Christian world and life view. It’s not that I’m afraid to give my opinions, I just know that my opinions are feeble and fallible compared to the riches and unchanging truth of God’s Word. I don’t want to hand out a voter guide based on my opinion, I don’t even tell my own children how to vote, but I have taught them the biblical criteria of evaluating candidates and understanding the principals behind their platforms.

Some people have been confused by my lack of comment on political issues and candidates and assume either I’m trying to hide my personal views because they differ from theirs, or that I’m afraid to speak my mind in fear of legal or tax issues. Let me be clear, there is no law on the books or tax code wielded by the IRS that could ever keep me from preaching the truth of God’s words with boldness and clarity. I once had someone ask me how difficult it was to prepare sermons knowing that I was under an IRS gag order (He was referring to the 1954 resolution aimed at amending IRS tax code, section 501, headed by then Senator LBJ), hence earning the name the Johnson amendment in which this was added to the tax code regulating non-profit organizations.

Deny tax-exempt status to only those people who influence legislation, but also those who give in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate or any public issue.

This is a restriction aimed specifically at pulpit preaching, mostly because of, the outcry from many pulpits when it was found out that LBJ had won his Senate seat through election fraud (earning the nick name Land slide Lyndon – he won by 87 votes - and it was proven that hundreds, if not thousands of his votes were fraudulent), but was able to work the courts through injunctions and other back room dealings to keep, not only his, but his standing as a senator, but his standing as a front runner, six years later, as a candidate for the Vice Presidency (see below). While I believe this amendment is wrong and reflects a movement away from our Founding Father’s appreciation for and protection of religious organizations, specifically, the church, I know it doesn’t effect me at all. I preach what the Word says. I don’t use the pulpit to rally political capital, or to influence any political opinion on behalf of any candidate or any public issue. My prayer is that I would be part of the answer to J. Gresham Machen’s prayer (a professor at Princeton who became the founder of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and Westminster Seminary):

"Wise pastors prompt [Christians] to form associations outside the church, and leave the church to its central task from which so many blessings flow. That pattern in the 18th and 19th centuries worked exceptionally well. New England pastors in colonial times preached and taught what the Bible said about liberty, and the Sons of Liberty — not a subset of any particular church — effectively sponsored a tea party in Boston harbor. Pastors through America during those centuries preached about biblical poverty fighting, and in city after city Christians formed profit organizations specifically to work the courts through injunctions and other back room dealings to keep, not only their church, but their standing as a senator, but their standing as a front runner, six years later, as a candidate for the Vice Presidency."
organizations such as (in New York) the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor.” (WORLD, June 16, 2012, 108)

My job is to feed the saints with such meals that they go out strengthened and robust and able to do the study and possess the courage and do the action needed as salt and light in this world. And that will go away if you insist on the church and the ministry being the political leaders. It will and we can point to many where it has.

For the glory of the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords,

Pastor Todd

Wikipedia article:

In the 1948 elections, Johnson again ran for the Senate and won. This election was highly controversial: in a three-way Democratic Party primary Johnson faced a well-known former governor, Coke Stevenson, and a third candidate. Johnson drew crowds to fairgrounds with his rented helicopter dubbed "The Johnson City Windmill". He raised money to flood the state with campaign circulars and won over conservatives by voting for the Taft-Hartley act (curbing union power) as well as by criticizing unions.

Stevenson came in first but lacked a majority, so a runoff was held. Johnson campaigned even harder this time around, while Stevenson's efforts were surprisingly poor. The runoff count took a week. The Democratic State Central Committee (not the State of Texas, because the matter was a party primary) handled the count, and it finally announced that Johnson had won by 87 votes. By a majority of one member (29–28) the committee voted to certify Johnson's nomination, with the last vote cast on Johnson's behalf by Temple, Texas, publisher Frank W. Mayborn, who rushed back to

Love & Logic Seminar - Weekly Seminar at SHPC
Led by Peggy Bannan

Thursdays from 9am-11am - October 4th, 11th and 18th.

Join us for America's most practical and entertaining parent training on how to become a love and logic parent!

~  Would you like to feel more confident as a parent?
~  Would you like to have more fun parenting?
~  Would you like to feel more relaxed at the end of the day?

This course in parenting is designed to give you practical skills that can be used immediately.

Childcare provided and no fee.

Evening session may be added - watch for more info.

Registration flyers available at church on the Welcome Center.
Our 5th Annual Fall Festival will be held on **Saturday, October 20th, from 11am-4pm.** There will be a White Elephant stand, face-painting, moon bounces, bake sale, food, music by “Holy Smoke” and games for the kids. The White Elephant stand will open at 8am and all proceeds will benefit the new building. You may bring in donations starting Monday, October 15th - we will not be taking electronics or books this year.

For all you bakers out there, we will need donations for the bake sale. We need cakes, pies, individually wrapped cookies and brownies. Be creative! Baked goods can be brought to the church on the 19th, or on the day.

We are still in need of helpers for this event, so please watch for more info on how you can get involved or sign up to help.

**Next meeting: Sunday, October 7th at 11am.**

---

**5th Quarter**

5th Quarter is a youth outreach held at KIHS after home football games. We usually have an event after every game, but due to limited help and resources, we will only be holding it on Homecoming weekend: **Friday, October 13th**

We need lots of helpers to make this happen: set-up starts around 5:30pm and the event around 9pm. We need lots of security helpers—meet at the information table @ 8:45pm, and bring a flashlight. There was an insert in the bulletin Sunday, as to our needs, so if you did not see that, please pick one up this weekend on the Welcome table.

**This is an important outreach for the youth of KI—please prayerfully think about making this your outreach opportunity.**

---

**Nyack College Concert & Christmas Dinner**

**Friday, November 30th at 6pm**

SH Annual Christmas Dinner followed by a Carol and Candlelight Concert by the Nyack College. This will comprise of a women's choir, brass ensemble and hand bell choir.

More info will follow on the dinner sign-ups.

**Need:**

We are housing the Nyack college group for one night, total of 30 students and adults. Please watch for the volunteer sign-up to help house for one night.

---

**Women’s Small Group.......**

**Women’s Group on Monday nights, 7:30-8:30pm**

Beth Moore study: “Daniel”

This will be a 6 week study and it will be held at the home of Carla Thomas. If you are interested, contact Carla Thomas.

**Start Date: October 8th.**

Pick up a Small group flyer in the narthex, for info on other small groups that are available.
The Run 4 Shelter was very successful. We want to give GOD all the glory and praise for such a beautiful day, volunteers, runners and for all the businesses and individuals that sponsored the event though monetary donations, in kind gifts. Also for everyone who gave their time to help keep everything running smoothly. We had over 150 volunteers. Thanks to all that kept praying for the event!

We’d like to give everyone who’s interested in volunteering at the shelter a chance to do so. We will be having volunteer sign up for the shelter starting next week. Some of our volunteers that have been part of our shelter team have moved away, so we have some gaps to fill. Visit our table in the narthex before or after church to fill out a volunteer form. If you’d like to help but can’t cover a shift at the shelter please stop by and pick up a list of shelter supplies. We do need prayer warriors to keep the shelter guest, staff, volunteers in their prayers. Mostly please pray that GOD’S love shine though us all when were serving at the shelter.

QACCA Emergency Food Pantry will start here at Safe Harbor. We are very thankful for being granted two rooms in the new building for this purpose. We’ll soon be announcing the changes to our Thanksgiving and Christmas food outreaches now that we have a emergence food pantry here at Safe Harbor. By now I’m sure you’ve all received an email about the new thrift shop that Liz Bazzell will be managing for the QACCA. The Thrift shop will be opening in November and there is a great need for volunteers.

In all of the above mentioned outreaches there are many opportunities for you to choose from to volunteer. For more details on any of the above outreaches, call Sandi Wiscott or Liz Bazzell, or better yet come to our next meeting on Tuesday October 8th at 6pm. We’ll have sign-ups for each of the above outreaches so stop by our table in the Narthex after church on Sunday.

QACCA Emergency Food Pantry will start here at Safe Harbor. We are very thankful for being granted two rooms in the new building for this purpose. We’ll soon be announcing the changes to our Thanksgiving and Christmas food outreaches now that we have a emergency food pantry here at Safe Harbor. By now I’m sure you’ve all received an email about the new thrift shop that Liz Bazzell will be managing for the QACCA. The Thrift shop will be opening in November and there is a great need for volunteers.

In all of the above mentioned outreaches there are many opportunities for you to choose from to volunteer. For more details on any of the above outreaches, call Sandi Wiscott or Liz Bazzell, or better yet come to our next meeting on Tuesday October 8th at 6pm. We’ll have sign-ups for each of the above outreaches so stop by our table in the Narthex after church on Sunday.

“I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the lease of these brothers of mine, you did for me.” Matthew 25:40

Volunteer Opportunities

Corsica Hills nursing facility in Centreville is inviting anyone who would like to participate in the volunteer opportunities they have. The holiday season is always full, but things wax and wane in the New Year and residents miss having the visitors.

There are many types of help opportunities: visiting to read, play games talk or even share their dog; group programming activities (planning and leading), or assisting with already scheduled events, ie bingo, parties, crafts. New ideas are always welcomed.

There is more info on the bulletin board, or you can contact Shelby Ruff, the recreation director, at 410-758-2323 or Shelby.ruff@genesishcc.com.

Thank you!
We are pleased to announce that Dave Ochinero has joined the Safe Harbor staff as a Pastoral Counselor and will con-
tinue his duties as Praise Worship Team Director. Dave has been a Christian Counselor for twenty years counseling chil-
dren, teens, individuals and couples combining sound counseling techniques with Biblical truth. Pastor Todd will continue
to see anyone who would prefer to talk with him.

The Pastoral Counseling position is designed to provide short term counseling to those in need as a ministry and is not
designed as a psychotherapy office with patients attending on a long term basis. Dave will assess each situation individu-
ally and determine if a client is better served by referring them to on-going therapy with a local therapist or giving them the
opportunity to see him at his full-time counseling position with Bruce Turnquist Psy.D & Associates.

Dave graduated from the University of Maryland with a Bachelors degree in Family and Community Development and
earned a Masters degree from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. Dave came to Safe Harbor after attend-
ing the Evangelical Presbyterian church of Annapolis for twelve years where he served as a worship leader and served as a
volunteer and staff with their New Vistas divorce recovery ministry.

Besides counseling Dave will also be assisting Pastor Todd with administrative duties helping with the shepherding
groups, small groups, and trying to make sure our visitors due not fall through the cracks. Any duties that would assist the
pastor and staff in daily office activities or other ministries also falls into the job description.

Those wishing to receive confidential counseling can call the church office to set up an appointment, walk-ins are ac-
cepted based on availability and there is no charge for counseling for members and regular attenders of Safe Harbor. A
$25.00 fee for non-members will be charged and the money will go to Safe Harbor.

Dave is at Safe Harbor on Mondays and Wednesdays from 8:30 AM – 12 noon and all day on Fridays.

---

**Announcing a QACCA Thrift Shop**

The Queen Anne County Christian Assistance ministry is opening a Thrift Shop to help support those in need. The funds will
support the homeless shelter and transitional housing and other needs that the QACCA ministers to. It will, most probably, be
located behind Cracker Barrel restaurant; we are now negotiating that lease. Our plan is to open for business around November
1st and to start taking donations for clothes now. Please label bags with QACCA and place them on the Faith with Feet table.
We will start taking donations for collectables and small appliances (nothing larger than a bread machine and no large baby
equipment).

The hours of operation will be Wednesday 10-2, Thursday 10-6, Friday 10-2, and Saturday 10-2. We hope to extend our hours as
soon as we have enough volunteers. We will take donations during store hours. I imagine that the week before we open we will
extend the donation hours and will keep everyone informed. Volunteer shifts will be 4/4.5 hour shifts as we need to make cer-
tain that the space is clean and inviting. We'll need help logging in the donations, sorters, steamers, straighteners and of course,
sales people. I would like to have 5 volunteers a shift.

I really do think it will be loads of fun and a great way to serve our Lord, shine our light, and to fellowship.

WE DESPERATELY NEED YOUR PRAYERS, DONATIONS AND YOUR VOLUNTEER TIME!

Please contact me as I will be managing this operation, including the volunteer scheduling and donations. We will not be accept-
ing any furniture, large appliances, under garments without tags, or large baby items (carriages etc.).

I would love any suggestions.

Liz Bazzell
lbazzell@hotmail.com
Teaching, Preaching and Fellowship

The Hamelrycks have been crazy busy the last several months. In May, Cole and Ann Rachel went to the states for a whirlwind visit. They were going to see Gabrielle since it would be a year or longer before she came home again. It was Cole’s first time back in 3 years. He said he couldn’t get over how much food there was. They had the opportunity to see Gabrielle play in her divisional championship game. She stayed in MD for the summer to intern with the youth at Broadneck Presbyterian Church.

Then in July, Paul and Harrison went to the states for almost 4 weeks. Paul was ordained by the Evangelical Church Alliance and was commissioned by PEF, Presbyterian Evangelical Fellowship. His time was filled with teaching, preaching and sharing about our work here in Zambia.

In August, we had a team of 9 come from BEP, in Arnold, MD, to help us as we aided one of our missionary partners in a huge mission conference. The team was invaluable to us! Ann Rachel was the coordinator for the kitchen at the conference. She needed to figure out how to feed 750 people 3 meals a day plus tea and snacks. The conference charged less than a dollar a meal so some of her job entailed fund raising to supplement the rest. She had to quickly learn how to cook Zambian style. There were many issues to conquer like getting rid of rats and roaches before the kitchen was usable. We ordered 10,400 bread rolls that the team constantly moved for Ann Rachel. It was a huge undertaking but by the Lord’s grace there was food enough for everyone and no one got food poisoning! The conference touched many lives and many were lead into missions.

Paul’s role at the conference was to teach a workshop on Relief and Development. He was also Ann Rachel’s back up in the kitchen and he helped with the logistics of moving the short termers from place to place. I believe our record for our Toyota Land cruiser was 14 adults. At least it was only a 20 minute drive each way!

Gabrielle has just entered her senior year at Messiah College. She continues to love playing lacrosse and has added Philosophy as a minor to her Math major.

Much to her mother’s sadness, Page is leaving for the states in September. She will be living with another large family in Florida and taking courses online to become a certified Family Herbalist. She has been Ann Rachel’s right hand for the last 3 years doing most of the cooking. Things will be very different in the Hamelryck household come October.

Currently, Ann Rachel is teaching her own children and leading a ladies’ study on “Shepherding a Child’s Heart”. She also is leading music some at church and hosting 100’s of people in our home each month.

Paul is working on getting out of the dairy business and more into rentals. He will be taking over the care of Bright Hope’s partners. He is the preacher at Grace Church and leads several Bible studies during the week. He has started an evangelistic outreach in town and is praying hard on how to reach the lost in Kabwe!

We would cherish your prayers as changes in the family happen and for God to give us wisdom and direction with our children, the church, and discipling of several young men and for the rest of our work here.

Please pass this around to your church mission’s committees and Bible study groups. We would appreciate any new partners. Blessings and Honor be to our God.

Write me at: phamelryck12@gmail.com

Donations to:
PEF
“Hamelryck Missions”
425 State Street, Ste. 312,
Bristol, VA 24201