



Lakewood CHURCH

6284 Fairview Road N, Baxter, MN 56425

Lakewood's Policy on Politics

Approved by the Elder Board on March 5th, 2016

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. It is Lakewood's position that we not promote one candidate over another. We hope that this article is being read by conservatives, progressives, liberals – the whole spectrum of political leanings – and that you each feel welcome at Lakewood.

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 Lakewood does not get involved in political concerns is more a fundamental issue of how we as a local congregation should interact with our culture and society as a whole.

We believe that God's agent of redemption in the world today is the church – not politicians or 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 (Brainerd Lakes Area) we should relate to our surrounding culture as a mission field, not a battle field. 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 (Jeremiah 29:7, Romans 13:1).

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). The gospel unites; politics can divide.

Therefore, at Lakewood you can expect NOT to hear any political endorsements; from the pulpit, in classes, or in any written form. You should not come out of the service and find any flyers on your vehicles. We will not give permission to individuals who want to politically influence our attendees as a target market.

The truths of Scripture are timeless and we will continue to explore how current societal issues are impacted by these timeless truths. As citizens 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 we should all be working to make our community 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.