



Community Impact

RESOURCE MANUAL

HOW TO ESTABLISH A MINISTRY AT YOUR CHURCH

INFORM | IGNITE | IMPACT

CommunityImpact.FRC.org

Community Impact Team Manual

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INTRODUCTION

Christians are dual citizens. We are citizens of the Kingdom of God by faith in Jesus Christ (Phil. 3:20). We are also citizens of an earthly “kingdom.” Consequently, we have obligations in both realms. Jesus commanded: “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s” (Matt. 22:21). As citizens of God’s Kingdom, we are to serve Jesus above all others as the King of Kings. As citizens of America, we are to submit to the civil government and obey the just laws of the land as a positive witness (1 Peter 2:15-17; Rom. 13:1-7). If the laws of the two kingdoms come into clear conflict, then as Peter and the Apostles put it: “We must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). Our allegiance is first, last, and always to Christ and his Kingdom, but we also have a responsibility as citizens of our nation.

Unlike citizens of the Roman Empire, Americans are blessed to have, as Abraham Lincoln put it, a “government of the people, by the people, and for the people.”¹ Have you noticed that the original parchment of the Constitution begins “We the People” in big, bold letters? The bottom line: Our American form of government requires our active involvement. How can we “give to Caesar what is Caesar’s” as citizens in America today? By praying for our officials, engaging government policy by speaking out on moral and social issues, voting for candidates and laws that promote righteousness and justice, paying taxes, serving in the military, holding public office, etc. The point is that we can obey Christ and serve as Christian citizens.

Not only do we have a dual citizenship, but we have been given dual commissions. Most Christians know about the “Great Commission” to take the Good News about Jesus to everyone, everywhere and to help those who receive the message become fully devoted followers of Christ (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8, etc.). Fewer believers are aware of the “Cultural Commission,” which is the practical application of the first instructions God gave humankind. God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them have dominion over...all the earth... God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it...’” (Gen. 1:26, 28). From the beginning, God delegated the development of culture and society to humankind.

Obviously, Adam and Eve sinned. Thus, we are all sinners by nature and by choice, and therefore all the communities and cultures we populate and shape are infected with sinful perspectives and values. Yet the Cultural Commission is still God’s mandate. In fact, we are commanded by Christ to be the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world” (Matt. 5:13-16). Simply, we are to resist the rot and dispel the darkness in every sphere of reality. We are to counter the pernicious and pervasive sinful influences in our culture by our own persistent and persuasive influence upon every part of the created order with the righteous and winsome values of the Kingdom. As Paul put it: “Don’t be overcome with evil, overcome evil with good” (Rom. 12:21). This includes exerting a positive influence on public policy and government because of the profound impact on our lives.

Not only do we have dual citizenship and dual commissions, but Jesus gave us two Great Commandments: Love God with all our heart, soul, and mind and love our neighbor as ourselves (Matt. 22:37-40). If we love God and love our neighbor, we will take seriously our dual citizenship and the dual commissions. Loving our neighbor certainly includes sharing the Good

News, but it also means that we will actively promote the common good in the context of our community, state, and nation.

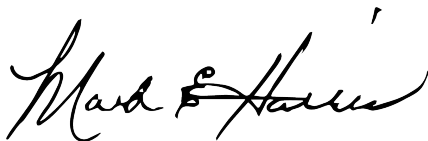
Respecting the basic human right to life, strengthening marriage and the family as the foundation of society, and protecting the right to practice one's faith freely and publicly—all contribute to the civility and wellness of a community. In part, we can accomplish those goals by advocating for public policies and seeking to elect public servants that best line up with these Kingdom values. The consequences are significant: "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when the wicked rule, the people groan" (Prov. 29:2). There is a great need for the church to assume an active role in renewing communities and creating a culture in which all human life is valued, families flourish, and religious liberty thrives.

If we don't do it, who will? And hasn't that been the problem over the past 60 years? The church has been mostly missing in action, and the consequences have become intolerable. In the absence of Christians taking their dual citizenship seriously, obeying the dual commissions faithfully, and attempting to follow the dual commandments devotedly, the devil's crowd has taken over key places of influence in our communities and culture largely by default, even in a nation where professing Christians are still in the majority. The solution is for God's people to return to Him (2 Chron. 7:14) and to function as the salt and light Jesus called us to be (Matt. 5:13-16).

This brief manual is designed to help launch a team of concerned Christians, commissioned by their church leadership, whose task is to inform, equip, alert, and mobilize their local congregation to exert a more effective Christian influence in their communities, especially in the public arena. The suggestions offered in this manual are meant to assist both leaders and members to create a Community Impact Team, but they are only suggestions. Every individual pastor and believer, each Community Impact Team and church must earnestly seek the Lord's will in their unique expression of what Jesus meant by "salt" and "light" in your ministry context.

We hope this manual will prove useful not only for churches taking the first steps toward community engagement but also for those fellowships that are already experienced at applying Christian principles to the culture. In short, this manual offers practical help for all who are serious about making a positive impact on their community, their state, and our nation.

Standing for Faith, Family, and Freedom,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mark Harris". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "M" and a distinct "H".

Mark Harris
Vice President of the Association of Churches, Family Research Council

About Family Research Council

Since 1983, Family Research Council (FRC) has advanced faith, family, and freedom in public policy and public opinion. FRC's team of seasoned experts promotes these core values through policy research, public education on Capitol Hill and in the media, and grassroots mobilization. We review legislation, meet with policymakers, publish books and pamphlets, build coalitions, testify before Congress, and maintain a powerful presence in print and broadcast media. Through our outreach to pastors, we equip churches to transform communities and culture. Strategically located in Washington, D.C., FRC is the leading voice for the family in our nation's halls of power. FRC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. For more information, please visit us on the web at FRC.org or call 1-800-225-4008.

I. CASTING THE VISION

With all the diversity in the body of Christ, the churches that are having the greatest impact for the common good typically share a common conviction: there is no substitute for obeying the Great Commission and the Cultural Commission. The body of Christ must provide persuasive moral influence in the public arena as the “salt” and must engage in personal evangelism as the “light.” There is no plan B. There is something else these successful churches often share in common: More often than not, the churches that are reaching people for Christ have an intentional plan for evangelism and the churches making a positive impact on the moral health of their community have a ministry team devoted to this purpose as an official part of their ministry structure.

These ministry teams are known by various different names—Christian Citizenship Committees, Salt & Light Groups, Moral Concerns Ministries, Current Issues Councils, etc.—but their function is the same: to provide in-house leadership for congregational response to the moral and social issues that impact the community, state, and nation. We’ve chosen to call these groups Community Impact Teams (CITs). Regardless of what you call yours, helping you to establish an effective one in your church is the desired outcome of this manual.

The Community Impact Team in the Local Church

Why a team and not just an individual? While a passionate individual can have success, a team can best accomplish the goal of mobilizing the entire membership to engage in informed activism. There are several spiritual and practical reasons for this approach, such as biblical accountability, maximum effectiveness, and utter survival. Consider Solomon’s wisdom: “Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken” (Ecclesiastes 4:12). Christians working together in the local church tend to be more influential in the long run than those trying to go it alone.

What does a Community Impact Team do? We suggest four fundamental tasks on which to concentrate. Basically, it is the CIT’s responsibility to:

1. *Inform* the church leadership and congregation about the moral issues being debated and acted on in the public arena;
2. *Equip* the membership as to how they can engage these issues;
3. *Alert* them when prayer and action is needed;
4. *Mobilize* them for various forms of action with a goal of making a positive impact for the greater good.

Let’s look at each one more in depth.

1. Informing

And this I pray, that your love may abound more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ. Philippians 1:9-10

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Hosea 4:6

The initial role of the CIT is educator. Clarifying Christian duties toward the community and providing your church with accurate and pertinent information on moral issues should be first on your agenda. “Why should Christians be concerned about social issues?” “What exactly should we be concerned about?” Answering these questions is your top priority.

Busyness is pandemic in our culture; most people just cannot find the time to stay informed. Ministers are notoriously overworked and far too busy to keep up on every social issue. The CIT is first and foremost a friend to the pastor. By supplying your leadership with the information to direct the congregation in matters of public policy, you will provide a desperately needed service. If your information is consistently balanced, thorough, and reliable you will win both gratitude and confidence. This confidence from your pastor is perhaps the single most necessary ingredient for the success of the CIT. Consider the church leadership your primary constituency. You will serve the church best by serving the leadership well.

Lack of time is also a big reason why church members may be uninvolved in the public square. This factor, along with a lack of reliable information, prevents the confidence they need to get involved. Under the guidance of the pastor, your second priority should be to educate the congregation both on current moral concerns and on the basic matters of Christian citizenship.

Your church probably has a committee devoted to evangelism or missions whose job it is partly to remind folks that every believer has a role in fulfilling the Great Commission. Likewise, while orchestrating church involvement in social issues, the CIT also reminds the congregation that every Christian has a responsibility here as well. Many Christians today are woefully misinformed about the ramifications of their faith in the public arena. Your presence helps the pastor to teach the congregation about these things. By informing and modeling the role of the Christian in society, you help to disciple the body of Christ!

The resources found in this manual will assist you to accomplish your two primary responsibilities as educator: to give your church reliable information on the moral issues of the day, and to disciple them into a fuller expression of their faith in action as the salt and light.

2. Equipping

All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service. Ephesians 4:11-12

Education is the first step in the discipleship of the Christian. But once informed, the question then becomes “What should we do?” “How do we respond?” The second role of the CIT is to equip, to provide the resources necessary for action. Merely knowing that I should do something is not enough to get me out of the pew and into action; you must also provide tools and show me how to get involved. It is not uncommon for the novice to experience an overwhelming sense of frustration when confronting the magnitude of today’s problems. In order to prevent the typical swing from apathy to futility, folks need to have a useful response for information you share.

“Whom should I call?” “Where should we go?” “Are there any experts who can help us?” “Are there any organizations that specialize in this ‘arena’?” “Has anyone dealt with this before?” The CIT must expect these types of questions and offer opportunities for involvement whenever a concern is shared. The good news is that there is no need to re-invent the wheel. Most social issues that your church will face have already been dealt with effectively by folks no braver than you! Therefore, your job is not to be a resident expert on everything from A to Z, but a resource center for the church—the Team with the connections. Family Research Council’s (FRC.org) family of websites (like CommunityImpactTeam.org and FRCAction.org) will be very helpful in equipping your congregation for effective action.

Again, the pastor is your foremost responsibility here. When it comes to taking action as a congregation, the pastoral leadership will be the ones to make the final decision; but you should educate and equip them. Pray regularly and specifically for wisdom and power as a Team. Schedule time to pray with the pastor. And when the opportunity comes to step out as a congregation, be an advisor. Recommending a course of action is yet another way to help the church leadership do their jobs. Knowing that you have already identified helpful resources and time-tested ways to be involved will further encourage your pastor’s confidence in you, not to mention your own self-assurance.

3. Alerting

Now as for you, son of man, I have appointed you a watchman... Ezekiel 33:7

For if the bugle produces an indistinct sound, who will prepare himself for battle? 1 Corinthians 14:8

Sometimes informing and equipping must then lead to a call to action. Far too many opportunities for Christian influence in the public square have been lost due to someone being asleep at the wheel. The third role of the CIT requires perhaps the most diligence and discernment. This is the role of watchman: to sound the alarm when the time comes for the church to take action. As the passage in 1st Corinthians puts it, the alert must be clear. The need to be both timely and accurate is obvious. It is no less important to have a well thought out plan of action. Above these three things there must be adequate prayer.

Submission to church leadership is critical at this point (Heb. 13:17). Your role as watchman is to bring both the alert and your recommendation to the attention of the leadership. But the decision to act lies with the one in authority. The actual call to arms is where most church leaders grow wary. If you have been reliable and responsible up to this point, it will likely translate into permission to move forward. However, if the leadership is not comfortable with moving forward, continue to build the relationship. Don't get discouraged. Continue providing intelligence reports and pray that the pastor will take the next step of allowing for an alert to the church.

CAUTION: The call to action can be the most overused function of the CIT. Sounding too many alarms, like the story of the boy who cried "Wolf!," is perhaps even worse than no alarm at all. Ill-timed or imprudent battle cries are to be avoided at all costs. Deciding when and what to alert the congregation about is a crucial matter for prayer in the CIT and with the pastor. It is quite common for those who get immersed in social issues to develop a sense of urgency not shared by others less familiar with the subject. This deep sense of urgency can be a liability, intimidating to those who are "outside" the situation. The CIT must exercise restraint in its capacity as watchman, showing prayerful wisdom over when, how often, and in what fashion they will sound the alarm.

When done correctly, however, the importance of this role is difficult to overestimate.

4. Mobilizing

And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly. Romans 12:6

... make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Philippians 2:2

Once the church leadership has agreed to a course of action, the pastor may return the ball to your court. The task at hand is then mobilization: to coordinate church involvement through the duration of a project. In some cases this role remains in the hands of the pastor, but they will often delegate to the CIT the responsibility of guiding the congregation through the particular involvement. Publicizing the action or event, coordinating volunteers, arranging for materials—these are types of activities that will require some administrative skill.

Knowing that this responsibility may be yours could help to moderate the frequency and ambition of your "alarms," but this is also a very rewarding function of the CIT. Seeing the church in action and watching the joy people experience as a result of actually being salt and light in the community is very satisfying indeed. And, of course, the more timely and appropriate the involvement (i.e. the better you fulfill your role), the more likely your church will be to participate the next time! Inform, Equip, Alert, and Mobilize: these are the basic ways in which the CIT can serve the body of Christ.

The Community Impact Team in the Community

There are friends both inside and outside the church ready and willing to help. Another significant role of the CIT is to enlist those friends to join the effort to advance faith, family, and freedom. This is the role of liaison; acting as the link to other churches and organizations.

To further assist you in this task, FRC provides resources for churches on its website such as regular Bulletin Inserts on various topics that can serve the educational purpose of your CIT. FRC focuses primarily on what is going on in Washington, D.C., and it is important that you or members of the CIT sign up for free updates on national matters (FRC.org). FRC's sister organization, Family Research Council Action, provides voter guides and other channels of action concerning elections and pending legislation (FRCAction.org). It is also important to keep up to speed on moral issues in your state, so locate your state Family Policy Council and subscribe to their communications as well (FRCAction.org/state-fpc). For information about legal issues impacting culture and religious liberty, there are a number of excellent groups. Among the ones we partner with most are First Liberty, Alliance Defending Freedom, and Liberty Counsel, but there are others.

By acting in liaison with FRC and other organizations in the state, the CIT can tap into a nationwide network. As we mentioned before, there is no need to re-invent the wheel; most issues that your church will face have already been dealt with effectively. A liaison does not need to be an expert on everything but serve as a resource for the church. As you develop your CIT, different members of the Team could be responsible for monitoring certain sources of information and relaying that to the proper person on the Team whose function is dissemination of the information. The goal is to encourage synergy, where the total effect of cooperative action is greater than the sum of individual efforts.

II. GETTING STARTED

So far, we have summarized the vision of the CIT in the church and in the greater network of pro-family groups. Now we turn to the nuts and bolts of creating such a Team in your church.

Form the Team

The most basic prerequisite for any sort of Community Impact Team is getting the consent and blessing of the pastor and church leadership. This is not to say that a pastor must run the Team or even attend every meeting, but submitting to pastoral authority is a biblical necessity (Heb. 13:17). Of course, it also stands to reason that the church which most exemplifies a respect for moral authority has the best chance of promoting it in the community. Therefore, the pastor must give assent to the establishment of the Team and be consulted on major undertakings for maximum effectiveness.

Pastor Generated: There are a variety of ways to start a Community Impact Team in your church. The pastor may be the catalyst that gets it started. Given the great demands placed upon most pastors, we recommend that a qualified church member be identified to chair the Team. As mentioned above, however, a system of pastoral accountability must guide the Team in fulfilling its responsibilities. Churches with a team of pastors will want to designate one of the pastoral leadership team members to be the point person relating to the CIT.

Team leadership requirements may be different from what characterizes the stereotypical “activist.” While the Lord has blessed some people with a tremendous amount of energy and tenacity, the most important qualifications of a CIT leader should include depth of spiritual maturity, a servant heart, a gift for consensus building, and no overt tendencies toward rebellion or fruitless confrontation (1 Tim. 3:2-12; Titus 1:6-9). Political “flamethrowers” will be more destructive than helpful.

People Generated: If you are a member who is feeling the call to increase the community engagement of your church, you might first want to identify other church members who share your concern. Support may be as close as your church’s pro-life group, home-school network, or Bible study. The next step is to approach your pastor. Perhaps you would want to broach the topic by going through this manual together. You may also wish to present the material about a Biblical Basis for engagement that you can download from the resources section of the website or consider inviting some of the church leadership to view Lesson 9 of *The Truth Project* (see TheTruthProject.org) on “The State.”

Regardless of whether you are pastor or church member, leader or follower, novice or veteran, prayer is the order of the day, both in identifying folks who share the vision and in approaching those who may have less affinity for the social dimensions of living out our faith. Unless all these undertakings begin and continue through the power of the Holy Spirit, they will be of little eternal value and may actually do more harm than good!

Develop a Statement of Mission/Purpose

Before outlining specific functions of the members of the CIT, we suggest that you prayerfully craft a mission/purpose statement. It might be helpful to look over some sample statements:

“engage! is a non-partisan ministry to encourage the body of Christ to get involved in the civic arena with the compassion and wisdom of Christ.”

Hill Country Bible Church, Austin, Texas, engage!

“The Culture Impact Ministry will inform and equip FBC Indian Trail and our community to be involved in the culture by alerting them to the cultural issues of the day and mobilizing them to stand for our Judeo-Christian values as we engage the Culture for Christ.”

First Baptist Church, Indian Trail, N.C., Community Impact Ministry

“The Watchmen Ministry is a non-partisan information center providing resources that promote good government according to Biblical principles without any political party affiliation.”

Calvary Chapel Chino Hills, Calif., Watchmen Ministry

“Informed Christians being salt and light by working to bring Godly values back to our culture.”

Church for All Nations, Colorado Springs, Colo., Community Impact Team

“Our mission is to educate and empower Christians to take concerted actions locally and nationally to promote and protect biblical values in our culture.”

Community Impact Ministry of Pittsburgh, Pa.

Obviously, the mission/purpose statement for your CIT should be adapted to your particular congregation.

Organize the Members

Team structure is first determined by size. In a small church, the Team may not be much larger than you; but if there are many interested people, the group may decide to organize either functionally or topically. If folks have general concerns and specific skills, you may divide labor functionally with roles such as team leader, researcher, communicator, event coordinator, and intercessor. If you have more people with specific concerns and general skills, you may divide labor topically under issue categories, such as abortion, sex education, religious freedom, etc.

Most groups incorporate both function and topic into their organization. Because three of your four fundamental responsibilities entail gathering and disseminating information, it makes sense

that you have people with gifts in those areas. Someone must have the duty of leading the group and serving as a liaison to the pastor or one the pastoral staff. Someone needs to keep up to date on the issues. There also ought to be someone with writing skills in the group, since you will often need to present your information in written form (social media, bulletin announcements, webpages, newsletters, etc.).

Specifically, here are some suggestions toward establishing job descriptions for Team members:

Leadership: Under the leadership of the pastor, the Team leader will be responsible for directing the team to accomplish the Community Impact Team's mission of defending and advancing faith, family, and freedom. The Team leader will prioritize mission tasks, administrate team personnel, and oversee allocation of budget resources.

Skill Set: Must be able to see the big picture, good communicator/vision caster, organizer, and encourager.

Information Management: These Team members will primarily do research on local, state, and national moral issues and share information with Team members in strategy meetings for further dissemination to the congregation and community. They will also assist the pastor by providing essential data regarding key issues and submitting written recommendations regarding key issues that might warrant public (i.e., pulpit) exposure. The goal is to provide the pastor with concise, brief, and well-written information about the issues for prayerful consideration.

Skill Set: Must be tech savvy, conversant with movement websites, and able to prioritize multiple issues.

Communications: These Team members will handle e-mail and text network and social media messaging as well as statements, releases, articles, editorials, interviews, and advertising. They will also assist the pastor with coordinating and executing local and/or regional events, conferences, rallies, keynote addresses, campaigns, etc.

Skill Set: Must be good at written and verbal communication.

Mobilization: These team members will encourage grassroots participation and involvement in general mission tasks, such as signing up for the e-mail or text networks, petition drives, church-based, non-partisan voter registration, etc. However, there will also be encouragement toward involvement in pregnancy support centers, school board meetings, community prayer emphases (e.g., National Day of Prayer, See You At The Pole), civil government gatherings, public office, service projects that show the love of Jesus in practical ways, etc. This will not only include enlistment of local church members, but also reaching out to other like-minded churches and Christian leaders in the area.

Skill Set: Must be a people person, good communicator, and not afraid to ask, enlist, delegate, and manage.

Strategy: All team members will be expected to help develop creative strategies for equipping the local church both to understand the critical moral issues and to engage their culture and community with biblical values.

Regarding the formal relationship of the Team to the church, a lot depends on your type of church government. In general, these committees tend to fall under the umbrella of Christian Education/Adult Ministries (since education and discipleship are essential) or Missions/Outreach (since social action is so closely related to evangelism). Discussion with the pastor should provide direction on how the Team is to fit into the organization of the church.

Prayer Support: This team member will be responsible for leading the team in prayer for their efforts as well as recruiting a team of intercessors to pray. If the church does not have a prayer room or dedicated prayer ministry, this would be a good person to lead that effort. Of course, praying for government would be a vital part of this ministry (1 Tim. 2:1-2).

Skill Set: Feels called as an Intercessor and demonstrates that calling.

Develop a Budget

Ministry takes money. Churches launching a CIT should consider committing a budget line item to facilitate the ministry. Basically, entry level churches may want to start with 1% of undesignated receipts or a set amount. Intermediate level churches may want to add another 1% for the state Family Policy Council (or like-minded state-wide group). Advanced level churches could add yet another 1% designated for the national Family Research Council.

In other words, a model formula would be as follows:

- 1% for the local church Community Impact Team
- 1% for the state Family Policy Council (or Comparable Group).
- 1% for the national Family Research Council

Again, these are only suggestions. Churches may want to designate a dollar amount or even give higher percentages. It is up to each local church as to what investment they are willing to make in order to make a positive impact on the community and culture.

Set Up a Community Impact Center

You need a place in the church to serve as your base of operations and a resource center. Having a designated location in the church will provide visibility for the ministry and give people an opportunity to become informed and, in turn, become involved. You can conduct voter registration, provide issue analysis, distribute non-partisan voter guides, and urge action to church members who are interested. You can also promote your ministry, answer questions regarding the issues, host petition drives, conduct fundraising for a Pregnancy Resource Center, etc.

You can begin with something as simple as setting up a table in the church. A step up would be a spindle or rack full of resources. The ultimate would be a booth presence. If you are interested, Family Research Council has some different types for purchase. Afterward, they can be ordered for a nominal donation. An Order Form for different types of Community Impact Centers can be found on the resource section of the website.

Begin Strategy Meetings

Again, size and structure play a large role in how your strategy meetings will be handled. In general, you may wish to start with a meeting every other week. Some CITs might meet as often as once a week, but at least once a month. The internet has made group communication without physical meetings more possible than in the past. The Lord's blessing and guidance should be invoked at the beginning of every gathering, and the essence of what takes place should be recorded by someone acting as secretary. These minutes should be kept on file for future reference, and a report should be sent to the pastoral staff.

Prepare an agenda beforehand in respect for your own time and that of your fellow Team members. It should always allow time for prayer, review of the minutes from the previous meeting, updates on current issues and projects, discussion of pending issues, and prayerful planning of action items for the church. In discussing information brought to the meetings, small groups may wish to proceed informally. However, larger groups may find it helpful to consult a meeting guideline, such as the popular *Roberts' Rules of Order*.

III. MOVING FORWARD

Now that we have laid the basic biblical foundations and offered some practical steps toward getting started, let's explore some of the means of staying informed, some methods of communication, a few examples of projects, and the legal guidelines that will prove to be helpful as you move forward with this ministry.

Stay Informed

If you have been following moral issues for a while, you probably have a pretty good idea what issues your CIT will address. If this is your first serious consideration of involvement, you will want to start by becoming apprised of the shared concerns and relevant issues in your community. Either way, getting and staying informed is a high priority for the CIT.

Fortunately, you need neither a large budget nor a staff of researchers to stay informed, since there are many organizations with full-time staff to do that job for you. Plus, they are online and many send out Action Alerts on key issues. A great place to start is FRC's daily "Washington Update," to which the whole CIT should subscribe as well as the church leadership team. A couple of other helpful daily emails are Gary Bauer's "End of Day Report" and the "Daily BreakPoint Updates."

An effective CIT will have a regular flow of information from a variety of sources. The online resources listed below represent a growing list of websites that offer both a general overview of the issues and deeper research on particular topics. In fact, as you are reading the list, it will likely already be out of date! However, we offer these in hopes that you will find what you need:

Find Your Elected Officials

Family Research Council Action frcaction.org/contact-officials

President whitehouse.gov and email @ president@whitehouse.gov

Congress

Representatives <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>

Senators http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

Pro-Family Organizations and Research Sources:

American Family Association afa.net

Concerned Women for America cwfa.org

Family Research Council frc.org

Heritage Foundation heritage.org

Legal Organizations:

Alliance Defending Freedom adflegal.org

First Liberty Institute firstliberty.org

Liberty Counsel lc.org

Prayer Organizations:

Congressional Prayer Caucus prayercaucus.com

Intercessors for America ifapray.org

National Day of Prayer Task Force nationaldayofprayer.org

Anti-Pornography Groups

National Center on Sexual Exploitation endsexualexploitation.org

Enough Is Enough enough.org

Fight the New Drug fightthenewdrug.org

Black History

African American Perspectives <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/aap/aaphome.html>

Freedmen's Bureau Online <http://freedmensbureau.com>

Harper's Weekly <http://blackhistory.harpweek.com>

Neglected Voices (Biographies and Speeches of the first African American Congressmen)
<https://www.law.nyu.edu/neglectedvoices>

Education

Christian Educators Association ceai.org

Gateways to Better Education gtbe.org

Home School Legal Defense Association hsllda.org

The Center for Education Reform edreform.com

Family Research Council frc.org/education

Environmental Issues The Cornwall Alliance cornwallalliance.org

Founding Fathers

WallBuilders wallbuilders.com

Journals of the Continental Congress <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwjc.html>

Annals of Congress <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwac.html>

State Charters and Constitutions http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/statech.asp

The Federalist Papers <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/histdox/fedpapers.html>

Online Library of Liberty oll.libertyfund.org

Religion and the Founding of the American Republic from the Library of Congress
<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/>

Benjamin Franklin Autobiography www.earlyamerica.com/lives/franklin/

Benjamin Franklin Papers franklinpapers.org

George Washington Papers loc.gov/collections/george-washington-papers/about-this-collection/

George Washington Writings oll.libertyfund.org/titles/washington-the-writings-of-george-washington-14-vols

James Madison Papers loc.gov/collections/james-madison-papers/about-this-collection/

James Wilson Works oll.libertyfund.org/titles/wilson-collected-works-of-james-wilson-vol-1

John Adams Family Papers masshist.org/digitaladams/archive/

John Jay Papers dlc.library.columbia.edu/jay

John Quincy Adams Diaries masshist.org/jqadiaries/php/

Samuel Adams Writings (Vols. 2-4)

<http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/gutbook/author?name=Adams%2C%20Samuel%2C%201722-1803>

Thomas Jefferson Papers loc.gov/collections/thomas-jefferson-papers/about-this-collection/

Origins

Answers in Genesis answersingenesis.org

Discovery Institute discovery.org

Institute for Creation Research icr.org

Pro-Life Groups

American Life League all.org
Care Net care-net.org
Americans United For Life aul.org
Human Coalition humancoalition.org
Heartbeat International heartbeatinternational.org
Life Issues Institute lifeissues.org
Life Dynamics lifedynamics.com
Live Action liveaction.org
National Right to Life nrlc.org
Priests For Life priestsforlife.org

Pastors

Family Research Council's Watchmen Pastors WatchmenPastors.org
Vision America visionamerica.org

Worldview Resources

Summit Ministries summit.org
Truth for a New Generation truthforanewgeneration.com
The Truth Project thetruthproject.org
Worldview Weekend worldviewweekend.com
Center for Biblical Worldview frc.org/biblical-worldview

While you may entrust the state and national pro-family organizations to provide information about their respective spheres of responsibility, the local scene is yours to monitor! As you grow, look for someone to follow meetings of the school board and city council (these are often broadcast live over local cable channels, Facebook, or archived on YouTube).

Communicate with the Congregation

With the alarming number of moral issues being debated in the public arena, it is imperative that the Community Impact Team provide clear and accurate information that will equip church members for their role as salt and light. It is useful to consider the various ways to communicate with the congregation. Remember that the object is certainly not for the Team to end up doing everything on its own or even on behalf of the congregation, but to get the whole church involved. This may be accomplished in a variety of ways, all of which involve regular communication with the congregation.

The most obvious and effective means of communication is an announcement from the pulpit by the pastor. This vehicle carries perhaps the greatest weight, but be careful! Pulpit announcements should be used sparingly so that they have greater effect at those times when you really do need the “big guns.” There are other ways of setting up your regular dialogue with the congregation:

Email and Text Blasts: A reliable and direct means of communicating with the members of the congregation is by email and text. Emails are becoming less and less effective because everyone's Inbox is full and overflowing. Text is better, but remember that not as many people are likely to give out their phone numbers. A great tool for sending a group message by text is

through the Remind App. You can set it up to either allow or not allow a response. Obviously, not allowing a response will make the communication more streamlined and most members will appreciate just a one-way message. You should seek to get the pastor's approval for obtaining email addresses and cell phone numbers from interested members and communicating through those means. Just be mindful that everyone is just as busy as you are and we all fight information overload. Keep communications short and simple and only send them when action is desperately needed. All of the Team members should work to cultivate the lists, but only one of the Team members should work to maintain and send to them.

Social Media Posts: Another means of rapid and effective communication is through social media channels (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram). Facebook is best. You can set up a group as well as set up instant messaging to the group and to individuals. You can use graphics, videos, and memes to communicate your message. Twitter communications need to be precise and accurate because it is tough to correct, and it is out there for all the world to see. Instagram will reach the younger generations, but it only lasts for so many hours before disappearing. Again, one team member needs to be designated as the lead on posting the messaging.

Bulletin Inserts: Bulletin inserts arguably provide the broadest coverage of the congregation since almost everyone who comes to church will read one if it is inserted in the Worship Folder. A frequent drawback is the small amount of space available, but there may also be topical and stylistic limitations (e.g., modesty may prevent mention of certain concerns). Still, this can be an effective line of communication. Bulletin inserts are also available from Family Research Council (see watchmenpastors.org/tools-for-pastors), state Family Policy Councils, and even from some denominational organizations. There are several examples in the Sample tab.

Worship Slides: Many churches have projectors and screens for worship songs, the pastor's sermon notes, and announcements. A great way to communicate would be to work with the worship/media team to create a slide that communicates the message needed during the worship service. Of course, all such communications need to be cleared by the church leadership team.

Church Publications (Digital and Print): Church web sites and Facebook pages are another option. If your church already has an established print newsletter, online newsletter, or e-mail blast, you might consider seeking a regular blurb in it or including an insert; or you could start your own. Many of the pro-family groups listed in the resource section permit churches to forward and even reproduce their articles and publications under special arrangements. In this way, an appealing publication can be assembled by a rather small team.

Relational Networks: Leaders of adult classes are a natural network within the church. Sometimes a bulletin insert or flyer may not be appropriate for the whole church to see (given that children will read it), so it could be more effective to distribute them through the adult Bible study groups instead. Building a relationship between the CIT and the various Bible study groups within your congregation is another way of getting the message out.

Small Group Studies: Keeping in mind the need to make disciples, the CIT could work with the Christian Education department to plan an adult education series on Christian social responsibilities. It could be something as pre-packaged as *The Truth Project* trainings or another

video-driven study, like Rick Warren and Chuck Colson's *Wide Angle*. Or you may want to develop a small group discipleship study on what the Bible says about the moral issues being debated in the public arena. For a more tailored message, someone from your state's Family Policy Council could be asked to speak to your congregation about current issues, or a speaker from WallBuilders could come and speak about our Judeo-Christian heritage. Or you could have representatives of local prison ministries, drug and alcohol rehabilitation ministries, pregnancy resource centers, adoption ministries, sexual addiction ministries, and the list goes on.

Start Some Basic Projects

Praying for Elected Officials: Entry level projects for your CIT include informing the congregation about who their elected officials are and reminding them of the biblical exhortation to pray faithfully for these public servants (1 Tim. 2:1-4). One of the first steps of the new Team could be the creation of a list naming all of your elected officials, from local school board all the way up to the White House (include office address, phone numbers, web pages, and emails if possible). This information may be obtained from simple internet searches (see fraction.org/contact-officials). You may then provide the list for the congregation and update it appropriately.

Contacting Elected Officials: Once your church is comfortable praying for their elected officials, the next step would be to find out where they stand on the moral issues and begin contacting them. Contact information for the President and Congress appears below:

Contact the President: Phone: Comment Line (202) 456-1111; Switchboard (202) 456-1414; Website: whitehouse.gov; E-mail: whitehouse.gov/contact

Addressing Correspondence to the President:

The Honorable (full name)
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Contact your U.S. Representative or Senator: Phone: (202) 224-3121 and ask for your U.S. Representative's and/or Senator's office; Websites: house.gov ; senate.gov

Addressing Correspondence to a Senator:

The Honorable (full name)
__(Rm.#)__(name of)Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Addressing Correspondence to a Representative:

The Honorable (full name)
__(Rm.#)__ (name of) House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Unfortunately, there is no shortage of issues your congregation can begin calling and writing their representatives about. Get fully informed about what they stand for, and then contact them by:

- E-Mail: You may find your senators and representative directly from Family Research Council's website (communityimpact.frc.org/registration-drive). In most cases, you may also e-mail your elected officials directly. When writing an e-mail, follow the guidelines for letter writing given below.
- Phone Call: Remember that telephone calls are usually taken by a staff member, not the member of Congress.
 1. Identification: Identify yourself to the person who answers the phone, then ask to speak with the aide who handles the issue about which you wish to comment.
 2. Specification: After identifying yourself, tell the aide you would like to leave a brief message, specifying the reason for your call, such as: "Please tell Representative/Senator (Name) that I support/oppose (H.R. ___/S. ___)."
 3. Justification: You will also want to state reasons for your support or opposition to the bill.
 4. Clarification: Ask for your representative's or senators' position on the bill. You may also request a written response to your phone call.
 5. Gratification: Thank the person before hanging up.
- Letter: Remember these four guidelines as you write elected officials:
 1. Be Polite: When addressing the official, be sure to use the right title: Dear Representative or Dear Senator. When writing to the Chair of a Committee or the Speaker of the House, it is proper to address them as: Mr. Chairman or Madam Chairwoman, and Mr. Speaker or Madam Speaker.
 2. Be purposeful: State your purpose in the first paragraph of the letter. If your letter pertains to a specific piece of legislation, identify it accordingly, e.g., House bill: H. R. ___; Senate bill: S. ___.
 3. Be Practical: Get to the point, include key information, use an example to support your position, address only one issue, and, if possible, keep the letter to one page.
 4. Be Pleasant: Remember who you are and whose you are. There is an old country saying that has a lot of truth: You can catch more bees with honey than vinegar. Make sure you follow up with a thank-you note for their response—whether it was good or bad. Be a good witness for Christ.
- FAX: Use the same guidelines as for letter writing. Remember, one page!

- Personal Visit: Sometimes the best way to lobby your elected official isn't with an e-mail, phone-call, letter, or fax, but with a personal visit. Here are 7-Up's of a personal visit.¹
 1. *Call up.* Make an appointment with your official's office, either the home district office, state office, or the office in Washington. If the official isn't available for a meeting, the scheduler may refer you to an assistant who deals with the issue you're concerned with. If that happens, don't be discouraged because officials rely on their personnel to be their information gatherers and gatekeepers.
 2. *Pray up.* Pray for God's wisdom in how to approach the official, for the words to speak, and for openness on the part of the official (Neh. 2:4).
 3. *Study up.* Consult the websites of pro-family organizations and other sources for brief, concise, information on the issue in order to get handle on the most important points to make. Know your issue well enough to keep your conversation brief, since you may not have much time to make your case (Prov. 15:28a).
 4. *Dress up.* The commercials say: "Image is everything." It is not everything, but when meeting an official it is important. Being well dressed communicates confidence and respect—confidence in yourself and respect for the official (Esther 5:1-2).
 5. *Speak up.* As much as is possible, make your point in a compelling, winsome way (Prov. 22:11), and restrain the desire to become angry and combative (James 1:20). If the official is a believer, use Scripture, if not, don't. The Bible is true in every realm of reality; therefore there are all kinds of statistics to back it up. So use the evidence for your argument, not just a verse.
 6. *Close up.* Fifteen to twenty minutes is sufficient time if you're prepared well. Be sure to close the deal by making a specific request: "Will you co-sponsor this?" "Will you vote for this?" "Will you oppose that?" (Neh. 2:5-8). Once you've made your points, leave some information with the official, express your appreciation for a hearing—and leave.
 7. *Follow up.* Less than a week after your meeting, send a brief note: 1) thanking the official for his or her time, and 2) restating your point.

If we are going to make a positive impact on the direction of America, we must let our elected officials know how we stand on the issues and what we expect of them as our representatives. The laws they pass today will set the course for your community's tomorrow and your nation's future! Make sure your voice is heard. Sharing the truth in love can affect their decisions.

Conduct Voter Registration: Alert the congregation about upcoming elections and register them to vote. If the members of your church are not registered to vote, which is quite often the case in churches across America, then they are not equipped to do the most basic thing they can do to be salt and light: cast an informed vote. The CommunityImpactTeam.org website enables the visitor to begin the voter registration process online, consider the values we should use to evaluate candidates, view the political party platforms, examine the legal Do's and Don'ts about holding a voter registration drive in your church, etc. The website also contains everything needed for a Christian Citizenship Sunday, including a patriotic message, PowerPoint, Bulletin Insert, brief videos, etc., so please consult that resource and download the free materials or you can purchase

¹ Adapted from Concerned Women for America's Penny Nance and her "how to" for training lobbyists.

a Voter Impact Toolkit, a \$20 value, for only a nominal shipping and handling donation of \$5.00. Visit the Resources tab at watchmenpastors.org for ordering information.

We recommend that you do a Christian Citizenship Sunday at least once a year, close to July 4, and conduct voter registration. We also ask that consideration be given to having recurring voter registration efforts during election years, especially 6-8 weeks prior to an important election. There is a helpful Voting Resources tab at FRCAction.org for more information.

Use the resources from <https://communityimpact.frc.org/registration-drive> on that Sunday and (1) announce from the pulpit that today is “Christian Citizenship Sunday”; (2) either hand out the voter registration forms in the pews or have volunteers staff a table with the forms; and (3) collect the forms that are filled out and mail them to your county election commission office or drop them off. That’s really all there is to it! It may seem like a simple thing, but getting believers registered to vote is one of the most important things your Team can do to equip your church members to be salt and light in the public arena.

Equip the Congregation to Vote their Biblical Values: As Election Day draws near, you may encourage responsible voting by distributing non-partisan Voter Guides, which provide the candidates’ stance on pertinent issues (see frcaction.org for Voter Guides). However, the Bible is the ultimate “Voter Guide” when it comes to moral issues and selecting leaders. Exodus 18:21, says: “But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens.”

Remind the church that we not only have a responsibility to vote, but more than that we are also held to a higher standard of voting. Rather than having a blind allegiance to a political party, we must take the time to investigate the issues as well as the candidates. We must discern if they are in alignment with the values of the word of God. Point out what God’s word says about:

ABORTION: God made us in his image, He has known us, and cared for us from all eternity; therefore life is sacred. Psalm 139:13: *For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.* Exodus 20:13: *You shall not murder.*

Should a woman have control over the life in her body? Ezekiel 18:4: *Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine ...* 1 Peter 2:16: *[Live] as free [men], not using your liberty as a cloak for [evil] ...* (See also I Corinthians 6:19-20.)

Should a child who might be born deformed or handicapped be aborted? Exodus 4:11: *The Lord said to him, 'Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the Lord?'* Romans 9:20: *But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, 'Why did You make me like this?'*

Should a child conceived as a result of rape or incest be aborted? Deuteronomy 24:16: *The fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall the children put to death for their fathers.*

Should we create and destroy human embryos in order to obtain stem cells? Jeremiah 1:5: *Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.*

Question: Will the candidate/proposition for which you plan to vote protect the lives of pre-born children?

DECENCY: God's word tells us to avoid every appearance of evil (1 Thess. 5:22). Certainly, pornography and sexually oriented businesses are harmful to individuals, marriages, and the family, and therefore our society. Romans 12:1: *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living holy sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.* Matthew 5:28: *But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.* (See also Romans 13:13-14; 1 Corinthians 6:13b; Revelation 2:20-23.)

Question: Will the candidate/proposition strive to remove pornography and sexually oriented businesses from our community?

EDUCATION: God has delegated to parents and grandparents the primary responsibility of educating their children. Psalm 78:5: *He commanded our fathers, that they should [teach the commandments] to their children.* (See also Proverbs 22:6, Deuteronomy 6:6-9, Psalm 78:5-7, and Titus 2:1-8.)

Question: Does the candidate/proposition promote giving parents the choice to decide where their child should go to school and the freedom to opt their children out from being exposed to offensive sexual material that is often taught?

ENVIRONMENT: God has given us dominion over the creation as His stewards; we are not equal to or subject to the rest of creation. Genesis 1:26: *Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them have dominion over...all the earth...*

Question: Does the candidate/proposition seek to be a wise steward of creation or instead push for punitive measures based on a radical agenda that will end up causing hardship on people?

FAMILY: God ordained the family as the basic building block of a healthy society. Jesus said in Matthew 19:4-9 *“Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.” They said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?” He said to them, “Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality,^[d] and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”*

Question: Does the candidate/proposition promote healthy marriages and families and discourage no-fault divorce?

LGBT BEHAVIOR: God loves every person but opposes LGBT behavior. Leviticus 18:22: *You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination.* Deuteronomy 22:5: *A woman shall not wear a man's garment, nor shall a man put on a woman's cloak, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.* 1 Corinthians 6:9-10: *Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.* (See also Romans 1:18-27, 32.)

Question: Does the candidate/proposition support or endorse the LGBT movement?

JUDICIAL SELECTION: God desires judges and justices who impartially pursue righteousness and justice. Deuteronomy 16:18-20: *You shall appoint judges and officers ... which the Lord your God gives you ... and they shall judge the people with [righteous] judgment. You shall not pervert justice; you shall not show partiality, nor not take a bribe...* (See also 1 Samuel 6:7.)

Question: Will the judge for whom you vote or support make the law his/her own? What core values do they possess that might influence their judgments?

POVERTY: God has charged believers (not government institutions) to help the poor, widows, and orphans. Deuteronomy 15:7-8: *If there is among you a poor man of your brethren, within ... your land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart, nor shut your hand from your poor brother, but you shall open your hand wide to him and willingly lend him sufficient for his need, whatever he needs.* (See also James 1:27; James 2:15-16.)

Question: Does the candidate/proposition support a state/federal welfare system that enslaves the poor, steals their dignity, and promotes immorality?

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY: God has given every human being the basic freedom of being able to relate to and worship Him both privately and publicly, a freedom which is enshrined in our First Amendment. Galatians 5:1: *It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.*

Question: Does the candidate/proposition promote religious freedom in the public arena and seek to preserve our nation's Judeo-Christian heritage?

SECURITY: God has given us the right and a responsibility to defend our families, our homes, and our nation. Psalm 144:1: *Blessed be the LORD my Rock, who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle.*

Question: Does the candidate/proposition support the right to defend our families, our property, and our country?

There are many more issues to consider when voting. By way of caution, let it be said that there are probably more issues to be concerned about in the public arena today than any one church could possibly handle. As you begin to organize and operate your CIT, you must prioritize the issues that will command your attention. Start small!

Educating the congregation about one issue and alerting them to a bill in order to contact their legislators might be enough for one month. On the other hand, some issues will prioritize themselves. Local crises will emerge and demand your attention, such as an irresponsible sex education curriculum or the planned construction of a Planned Parenthood facility. However, the tyranny of the urgent is a hard master, and every effort should be made to strike a balance between addressing problems and preventing them. The need for prayer and the role of the Holy Spirit in setting the priorities for your CIT cannot be overstated.

Follow Legal Guidelines for Pastors and Churches

Is all of this constitutionally permissible? Yes. Will we endanger our church's non-profit status with the IRS? No, because clear guidelines have been established by the federal government. Taking a stand on moral issues from a biblical perspective, educating your congregation, calling them to action, and exerting grass-roots pressure on officials are all well within the law for churches as tax-exempt organizations. So there is a great deal that can be done, more than most churches realize!

Below is a brief outline of "Dos and Don'ts" for churches and pastors at election time, based on requirements by the Federal Election Campaign Act and Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The following are general guidelines. It is always a good idea to seek legal advice as you make specific plans for your church.

What churches MAY DO:

- * Conduct non-partisan voter registration/education drives.
- * Host candidate forums where all are invited and treated impartially.
- * Distribute voting records and candidate surveys in compliance with the neutrality rules set forth by the IRS.
- * Rent a church mailing list (at market value) to a candidate.
- * Publish an ad in the church bulletin for all who request, as long as the ad is purchased at the regular rate for such ads.
- * Publish news stories on political candidates, campaigns, and third-party endorsements of candidates.
- * Invite a political candidate to attend a church service or meeting. Should your church invite a candidate to church service, remember that other candidates for the office, regardless of party, should be given the same opportunity if they request it.
- * Contribute or expend up to 5% of its time or funds in any fiscal year to grassroots lobbying efforts, including contributing to ballot initiative campaigns.

What churches MAY NOT DO:

- * Endorse political candidates or contribute to political candidates or political action committees.
- * Participate in fund-raising projects for political candidates.
- * Make an outright donation of a mailing list to a political candidate.
- * Sell a political ad at a discount rate if no other advertisers are offered discounts.
- * Distribute candidate political statements.
- * Pay to attend a caucus for a state or national political convention.

For more, go to the “Legal Dos and Don’ts” section at <https://communityimpact.frc.org/registration-drive>

A Special Note about Pastors

As private citizens, pastors have the same rights as all Americans. Pastors may use the pulpit to take a stand on specific legislation, issues, or acts of government. The only place where limits have been set is with specific regard to campaigns and candidates. Basically, pastors can say just about anything from the pulpit except tell people how to vote. Now in their private capacity, they can take a stand on a political campaign and even endorse candidates. However, a pastor should always make it clear that any candidate-oriented efforts are those of a private citizen and not made on behalf of the church. No use of church facilities or resources or employee time should go toward the promotion of a candidate. Church funds must be kept separate from political campaign activities.

Churches and pastors with any questions should contact the Alliance Defending Freedom (adflegal.org) regarding its Pulpit Initiative and Church Project. For election sermons and sermons on Christian Citizenship, visit our website for pastors: WatchmenPastors.org and click on Resources and then Tools for Pastors.

IV. MAKING AN IMPACT

We have attempted to cast a vision for the Community Impact Team, talked about how to get started, and gave some pointers on moving forward. Finally, here are some coaching tips on how you can continue to make an impact over the long haul in this challenging ministry.

Maintain Priorities

With all that can be done to advance Kingdom values in the public arena, make sure there is still time in your day for personal worship, prayer, and Bible study. In the resource section, there are links to online devotionals that can be helpful, but nothing beats a humble heart before an open Bible. And while you are trying to “save the world,” don’t forget to spend time with your family. They will help you with perspective. Finally, find some people with whom you can be honest and open about your spiritual life for the sake of balance and accountability. Keep your priorities!

Avoid Burnout

The ministry of cultural engagement can be exasperating and exhausting, so there looms the specter of burnout. Remember: You were never meant to do everything! Moses tried it, and it didn’t work, so his wise father-in-law Jethro counseled him to delegate some of the work (Ex. 18:17-26). As soon as possible, bring others onto the Team and begin training others both to work with you and after you. Work toward not making yourself indispensable. Again, our work for the Lord should not push out our time with the Lord.

Expect Opposition

You will face opposition from professing Christians and members of the community. Some Christians are so “heavenly minded” that they are of no earthly good and will try to persuade us that we are wasting our time. The reasoning is that Jesus is coming soon and the Bible says that everything is going to get worse before that happens. While there is truth to that, Jesus told parables about servants who were given responsibilities while they were waiting on their master’s return, and they were rewarded according to their faithfulness or punished for their lack thereof (e.g., Luke 12:42-46; Matt. 25:14-30). In fact, Jesus himself said: “As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work” (John 9:4). There is work to do, and as country folk say: “Daylight’s a burnin’!”

On the other hand, some in the church are so “worldly minded” that they see our efforts as unkind or even “hateful” because we confront sinful behavior, policies, laws, politicians, etc. Unfortunately, their relationships with sinful people and alliances with ungodly leaders who follow an ungodly political platform weigh more in their thinking than clear biblical principles. Sometimes the only way to counter that is to balance our prophetic actions with grace and compassion. As Paul said, we are to “speak the truth in love” (Eph. 4:15). If we say we oppose abortion, we should also help with the local Pregnancy Resource Center. If we say we oppose the LGBT agenda, we should find ways to spend time with and minister to those in our communities and families who identify themselves in this way. Jesus was the perfect balance of Grace and

Truth (John 1:14) and he is our model for ministry. Remember, it was the mission of Jesus not only to seek and to save those who are lost (Luke 19:10), but also to expose the works of darkness and to destroy the works of the devil (John 3:19-20; 1 John 3:8).

Whether they are “heavenly minded” or “worldly minded,” both kinds of people can and will resist your efforts, sometimes passively but oftentimes actively. Try to set a course which maintains uncompromising values and reasonable expectations. Any apparent progress or setback you experience should be evaluated on the basis of these two criteria. Remember that your call is to speak the truth in love and be a faithful steward of the gifts, passions, and abilities that God has placed in you. Even if you could serve in this ministry flawlessly and with the purest of motives, your efforts would still be opposed, even by some who claim to share your faith in Christ. Don’t become discouraged because of opposition.

Look Heavenward

Lastly, be careful not to overlook the spiritual dimension of the battle in which we are engaged. Question: Who is ultimately behind the efforts to snuff out human life through abortion and embryo-destructive research? Who is behind the efforts to advance the radical LGBT agenda, change the definition of marriage, indoctrinate our children in sexual anarchy, and even ruin our military with radical sexual social experimentation? Who is behind the efforts to take God out of every public school and government institution and silence our free speech as Christians? Who is behind all of that? Paul makes it crystal clear when he says, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against demonic principalities and powers” (Eph. 6:10-13).

The real enemy is not the poor deluded souls who are promoting these ungodly agendas. They are simply pawns in the hands of their Malevolent Master. They are lost and are only doing what lost people do. They need to be introduced to the grace of God in the person of Jesus Christ and be set free (see John 8:34-36). The point is that the battle we fight is not just a political battle or merely a cultural battle—this is a spiritual battle. We are up against the organized, mobilized, demonized forces of hell. And to the victor goes the prize of the America our children will inherit, so this is a fight we dare not lose!

But we must fight the battle, first of all, on our knees. Samuel Chadwick stated: “The one concern of the devil is to keep the saints from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, he mocks at our wisdom, but he trembles when we pray.” We need to remember that victory comes not by political “might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord” (Zech. 4:6). We need to remember that “some trust in chariots and some trust in horses” like politicians and political parties, but we need to “trust in the name of the Lord our God” (Psalm 20:7). As David said: “I lift up my eyes to the hills—where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth” (Psalm 121:1-2). Remember, the battle is the LORD’s!

So devote yourself to prayer. Every great spiritual awakening can be traced to the people of God, in humble and repentant prayer, seeking His face and favor on them and their nation. Make prayer a priority as you undertake the weighty assignment of leading the congregation to be

“salt” and “light” in your community. E.M. Bounds declared: “No man can do a great and enduring work for God who is not a man of prayer, and no man can be a man of prayer who does not give much time to praying.” Prayer should precede any action.

So with your eyes fixed on the Lord, put your hand to the plow. Guided and empowered by his Spirit, give it all you’ve got. This is your moment to make an impact on our culture as the stinging salt and the shining light. *Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.* 1 Corinthians 15:58

And never forget: “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving” (Col. 3:23-24).

PROJECTS

Projects

The following is a list of potential projects and action plans for your Community Impact Team (CIT), for individual church members, for your church, or even an association of churches.* They run from A to Z!

Adopt a Child

If you are a believer, you are adopted. We are all adopted as sons and daughters by our heavenly Father. Many adoptive parents testify that adoption gives them a whole new appreciation for God's love for us as Father. Remember, "For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world, to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love, He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, in accordance with His pleasure and will, to the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One he loves" (Ephesians 1:4-6). Adoption presents a powerful challenge to the abortion advocates and industry, testifying that every child is precious, valued, and wanted.

Resource(s):

- Bethany Christian Services (America's largest full-service Christian adoption agency) – Phone: (800) BETHANY (238-4269); Website: bethany.org
- National Council for Adoption – Phone: (703) 299-6633; Website: adoptioncouncil.org
- Christian Adoption Service – Website: christianadopt.org
- Focus on the Family – Website: waitnomore.org

Adopt a School

Tony Evans launched the National Church Adopt-A-School Initiative as a strategy that trains churches to partner with local public schools to provide mentoring, tutoring, and family support services. The website offers all kinds of helpful resources to help train, equip, and mobilize members to invest in schools in your community. Remember, 90% of children attend public schools. While our personal preference may be to home school or place our children in a Christian school, many families don't feel like they have an option. So let's love the 90% of our neighbors who are in the public schools. Together, we can win the next generation for God.

Resource(s):

- National Church Adopt-A-School Initiative – Website: churchadoptaschool.org

* This list of resources is modeled after *101 Ways to Reclaim America* (Coral Ridge, FL: Center for Reclaiming America, 2003). These action plans are by no means exhaustive, but are a starting point. If you have suggestions or ideas, please communicate them to Family Research Council (FRC). Also, FRC does not necessarily endorse all the beliefs, positions, or actions of the ministries cited as resources. They are merely listed because of their value as a resource in that particular area.

Adopt a Single-Parent Family

Raising a child is hard enough these days with two parents. Think of ways you might assist a single-parent family. Something as simple as running an errand, babysitting so mom or dad can have a break, helping with household or car repairs, or mowing the lawn can make a difference. Organize a group in your church to carry out this important ministry to a church member or to someone who needs Christ and a church home.

Resource(s):

- Liberty Godparent Home – Website: godparent.org
- Hope for Single Moms – hope4singlemoms.com

Ask Stores to Get Rid of Pornography

You may be shocked to learn that pornography can come disguised in packages readily for sale to our children. Sometimes it is included in computer software that has no connection to pornography. Filing a complaint and following up on it can be an important step in removing these offensive items from the shelves of stores in your area. Be on the alert and take action to protect the young people in your community.

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- Pure Hope – Phone: (513) 521-6227; Website: purehope.net

Attend Public Meetings

You can learn a great deal about what is going on in your community by attending public meetings and hearings held by your elected and appointed public officials on a regularly scheduled basis (usually monthly). City and Town Council Meetings, Planning and Zoning Hearing Boards, and other governmental agencies are required to meet and transact their business in public. The sunshine laws of most states require that these types of meetings be advertised and open to the public. This is a great way for you to get to know your elected officials and make them aware of your positions on the issues facing your community. Be informed! Get involved!

Resource(s):

- A list and dates of these meetings are available at the city and county government offices for each community and are normally published in your local newspaper.

Attend School Board Meetings

Public schools are being overwhelmed with secular, humanistic philosophies that are replacing Judeo-Christian values and biblical principles. Many of the public school boards, administrators,

and teaching staff openly exhibit an increasingly hostile attitude toward Christians and Christian beliefs. Pro-abortion and LGBT activists are busily advancing their agendas in the public schools and indoctrinating our children with beliefs that are clearly in conflict with a Judeo-Christian worldview and biblical teachings. Make sure a Christian perspective is represented at each school board meeting. A network of concerned parents from your church can attend the meetings on a rotating schedule and report to the others.

Resource(s):

- Check your local newspaper for meeting dates and times.

Become a Foster Parent

Foster parents have a tremendous influence on the lives of orphaned and displaced children. Although it takes a lot of careful consideration and sacrifice, being a foster parent can rescue young people from a path of destruction. The growing need for foster parents has far outpaced most government agencies' abilities to fill it. The problem has become so overwhelming that in Florida the state has asked churches to get more involved. Christians cannot squander this divine opportunity to provide a Christ-like solution to a growing need.

Resource(s):

- Contact the local office of your state's Department of Child and Family services and ask about the foster care program in your community.
- Arrow Child and Family Ministries – Website: arrow.org

Begin a Bible Study or Prayer Group at Work

You can help coworkers deal with the pressure and stress of their jobs by offering a weekly Bible study or prayer group where people can come for spiritual support and godly wisdom. It does not need to be anything extensive or complicated. Usually, brief and simple is best.

Resource(s):

- Crosswalk.com Online Devotionals – Website: crosswalk.com/devotionals
- Henry Blackaby Ministries (God in the Work Place) – Website: blackaby.net
- My Utmost for His Highest – Website: utmost.org
- Precepts Ministries – Website: precept.org
- The Navigators – Website: navigators.org

Boycott Program Sponsors

Some businesses sponsor TV shows with sex and violence because they want their product associated with a popular program—regardless of that program's content. Send letters disapproving of their sponsorship and communicate that you will not buy their product until they no longer support the objectionable program. You may want to mention that a 2002 study

reported in the American Psychological Association’s Journal of Applied Psychology found that shows with graphic sexual and violent content generally dull viewers’ senses—therefore, they are less likely than viewers of other shows to actually pay attention and respond to advertisements. Be sure to lobby family and friends to protest along with you.

Resource(s):

- American Family Association – Phone: (662) 844-5036; Website: afa.net
- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- Media Research Center – Phone: (800) 672-1423; Website: mrc.org
- Parents Television Council – Phone: (800) 882-6868; Website: parentstv.org

Bridge Cultural Barriers

Often there are misunderstandings between different ethnic groups, even among Christians. Work with your pastor to establish ties with Bible believing churches of other ethnic backgrounds, and begin breaking down racial barriers. Have a “Race-Relations Sunday.” Host joint activities or worship services, outreach projects, or social get-togethers. Establishing “bridges” of communication and fellowship in the name of Christ is a powerful testimony in a community. In areas with large numbers of recent immigrants, offering English as a Second Language (ESL) classes is often an effective and meaningful outreach. In fact, our church began a Hispanic mission church out of our ESL.

Resource(s):

- ESL Directory – Website: ESLdirectory.com

Call Talk Radio Programs

Talk Radio has become a leading forum for public expression. The next time a talk show host discusses an issue that interests you, write down what you want to say—your talking points. Then, using your notes, call and offer a sound biblical view. You can reach thousands who might not otherwise consult the Bible for answers to life’s problems. Remember, you are the salt and the light of the world.

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org/radio
- National Religious Broadcasters – Website: nrb.org

Conduct a Voter Registration Drive

This is a simple, yet important, step toward transforming America that can be taken right inside your church welcome center or lobby—A Christian Citizenship Sunday Voter Registration drive. Make sure to get permission from your pastor before hosting this event, and then you can get all the materials you need to register voters from your local County Supervisor of Elections. This is a great way to get your congregation involved in the governmental process. Sadly, only

one out of three believers actually vote in a given election. Remember, as Christians we have a duty to vote and to be salt and light in our communities: “You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:13a, 14a).

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Websites: frc.org; FRCAction.org
- Family Policy Alliance – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: FamilyPolicyAlliance.com

Contact Your Elected Officials

If you had to take a pop quiz on the names of your local and state officials, how would you do? Why not take a few minutes to find out their names? Along with their names, jot down their contact information for future ready reference. Get fully informed about what they stand for, and then contact them by:

- E-Mail: You may find your senators and representative directly from Family Research Council’s website (frcaction.org/contact-officials). In most cases, you may also e-mail your elected officials directly. When writing an e-mail, follow the guidelines for letter writing given below.
- Phone Call: Remember that telephone calls are usually taken by a staff member, not the member of Congress.
 - 1) Identification: Identify yourself to the person who answers the phone, then ask to speak with the aide who handles the issue about which you wish to comment.
 - 2) Specification: After identifying yourself, tell the aide you would like to leave a brief message, specifying the reason for your call, such as: “Please tell Representative/Senator (Name) that I support/oppose (H.R.____/S.____).”
 - 3) Justification: You will also want to state reasons for your support or opposition to the bill.
 - 4) Clarification: Ask for your representative’s or senators’ position on the bill. You may also request a written response to your phone call.
 - 5) Gratification: Thank the person before hanging up.
- Letter: Remember these four guidelines as you write elected officials:
 - 1) Be Polite: When addressing the official, be sure to use the right title: Dear Representative or Dear Senator. When writing to the Chair of a Committee or the Speaker of the House, it is proper to address them as: Mr. Chairman or Madam Chairwoman, and Mr. Speaker or Madam Speaker.
 - 2) Be purposeful: State your purpose in the first paragraph of the letter. If your letter pertains to a specific piece of legislation, identify it accordingly, e.g., House bill: H. R.____, Senate bill: S.____.
 - 3) Be Practical: Get to the point, include key information, use an example to support your position, address only one issue, and, if possible, keep the letter to one page.

- 4) Be Pleasant: Remember who you are and whose you are. There is an old country saying that has a lot of truth: You can catch more bees with honey than vinegar. Make sure you follow up with a thank-you note for their response—whether it was good or bad. Be a good witness for Christ.
- Fax: Use the same guidelines as for letter writing. Remember, one page!
 - Personal Visit: Sometimes the best way to lobby your elected official isn't with an e-mail, phone-call, letter, or fax, but with a personal visit. Here are "7-Up's" of a personal visit.²
 - 1) Call up. Make an appointment with your official's office, either the home district office, state office, or the office in Washington. If the official isn't available for a meeting, the scheduler may refer you to an assistant who deals with the issue you're concerned with. If that happens, don't be discouraged because officials rely on their personnel to be their information gatherers and gatekeepers.
 - 2) Pray up. Pray for God's wisdom in how to approach the official, for the words to speak, and for openness on the part of the official (Neh. 2:4).
 - 3) Study up. Consult For Faith & Family's website and other sources for brief, concise, information on the issue in order to get a handle on the most important points to make. Know your issue well enough to keep your conversation brief, since you may not have much time to make your case (Prov. 15:28a).
 - 4) Dress up. The commercials say: "Image is everything." It is not everything, but when meeting an official it is important. Being well dressed communicates confidence and respect—confidence in yourself and respect for the official (Esther 5:1-2).
 - 5) Speak up. As much as is possible, make your point in a compelling, winsome way (Prov. 22:11), and restrain the desire to become angry and combative (James 1:20). If the official is a believer, use Scripture, if not, don't. The Bible is true in every realm of reality; therefore there are all kinds of statistics to back it up. So use the evidence for your argument, not just a verse.
 - 6) Close up. Fifteen to twenty minutes is sufficient time if you're prepared well. Be sure to close the deal by making a specific request: "Will you co-sponsor this?" "Will you vote for this?" "Will you oppose that?" (Neh. 2:5-8). Once you've made your points, leave some information with the official, and express your appreciation for a hearing—and leave.
 - 7) Follow up. Less than a week after your meeting, send a brief note: 1) thanking the official for his or her time, and 2) restating your point.

If we are going to make a positive impact on the direction of America, we must let our elected officials know how we stand on the issues. The laws they pass today will set the course for your community's tomorrow and your nation's future! Make sure your voice is heard. Sharing the truth in love can affect their decisions.

Resource(s):

² Adapted from Concerned Women for America's Penny Nance and her "how to" for training lobbyists.

- Contact the President – Phone: Comment Line (202) 456-1111; Switchboard (202) 456-1414; Website: whitehouse.gov; E-mail: whitehouse.gov/contact

Addressing Correspondence to the President:

The Honorable (full name)
 The White House
 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
 Washington, DC 20500

- Contact your U.S. Representative or Senator – Phone: (202) 224-3121(Capitol Hill Switchboard) and ask for your U.S. Representative’s and/or Senator’s office; Websites: house.gov; senate.gov.

Addressing Correspondence to a Senator:

The Honorable (full name)
 __ (Rm.#) (name of) Senate Office Building
 United States Senate
 Washington, DC 20510

Addressing Correspondence to a Representative:

The Honorable (full name)
 __ (Rm.#) (name of) House Office Building
 United States House of Representatives
 Washington, DC 20515

- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- American Family Association – Phone: (662)844-5036; Website: afa.net
- Family Policy Alliance – Phone: (866)655-4545; Website: FamilyPolicyAlliance.com
- National Right to Life Committee – Phone: (202) 626-8800; Website: nrlc.org
- Check your local telephone directory for local representatives.

Contact TV Network Affiliates

Because TV networks are dependent on their audience, they pay close attention to the mail they receive. Write to the TV executives and let them know “the good, the bad, and the ugly.” Let your opinions be known. Demand that more good and wholesome family programming be aired! Don’t forget to thank them for the few good shows that are currently airing.

Resource(s):

- ABC Entertainment
 Phone: (310) 557-7777; Website: abc.com
 Address: 500 South Buena Vista Street
 Burbank, CA 91521
- CBS Entertainment
 Phone: (212) 975-4321; Website: cbs.com

Address: 51 West 52nd Street
New York, NY 10019

- NBC Entertainment
Phone: (818) 840-4444; Website: nbc.com
Address: 5750 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90036
- Fox Broadcasting Co. (FOX)
Phone: (310) 369-1000; Website: fox.com
Address: P.O. Box 900
Beverly Hills, CA 90212
- Warner Brothers Network (WB)
Phone: (818) 977-5000; Website: thewb.com
Address: 3400 Warner Boulevard,
Burbank, CA 91505

For up-to-date information on these and other stations, visit parentstv.org.

Create a Phone Alert Network

Phone “networks” play a key role in notifying families around the nation about important, time sensitive issues. Participate in, or create, a phone alert network in your community to get the word out on pro-life and pro-family issues. In January 2000, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) attempted to unconstitutionally limit religious broadcasting. The flood of phone calls from concerned citizens all over the country forced the FCC to reverse their decision less than thirty days after it was made public. Your phone calls can and do make a difference! Remember, God has given us a mandate to be the salt of the earth (Matthew 5:13), working to preserve our nation from the forces of corruption and decay.

Devote Yourself to Fast and Pray for America

America has a long legacy of prayer and fasting. The Founding Fathers publicly proclaimed the official observance of days of prayer and fasting. The Constitutional Congress regularly turned to prayer and declared a “National day of Prayer and Fasting.” For example, on May 17, 1776:

The Congress... desirous ... to have people of all ranks and degrees duly impressed with a solemn sense of God’s superintending providence, and of their duty to devoutly rely ... on His aid and direction... do earnestly recommend ... a day of humiliation, fasting and prayer, that we may with united hearts confess and bewail our manifold sins and

transgressions and, by a sincere repentance and amendment of life,... and through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, obtain His pardon and forgiveness.*

*Source: Vincent Wilson, Jr., *The Book of the Founding Fathers* (Brookeville, MD: American History Research Associates, 1974), 44.

Our nation has turned its back on its Judeo-Christian heritage in recent years, and prayer is steadily being removed from the public arena. As we face this culture war over our Christian values, we must value God's assistance above all. We need to fast and pray.

Resource(s):

- Call2Fall (5 minutes on our knees for America on the Sunday closest to Independence Day) – Website: Call2Fall.org
- Henry Blackaby Ministries (Fresh Encounter with God Kit) – Website: blackaby.org
- Intercessors for America – Website: ifapray.org
- International Awakening Ministries (Richard Owen Roberts) – Website: rortrust.org
- Center for National Renewal – Website: cfnr.org
- Campus Crusade – Website: cru.org

Elect Christians to Public Office

Having carefully studied the candidates' positions over against the Bible, "Citizen Christians" are accountable to God to support and elect Christians who will make a positive impact as salt and light through their office. John Jay, first Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, stated, "Providence has given to our people the choice of their rulers, and it is the duty, as well as the privilege and interest of our Christian nation to select and prefer Christians for their rulers."* One of the ways to change the direction of our nation is to place committed Christians in public office. Remember, "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when a wicked man rules, the people groan" (Proverbs 29:2 NKJV).

*Source: John Jay, in a statement made on October 12, 1816, *The Correspondence and Public Papers of John Jay*, Henry P. Johnston, ed., (New York: G.P Putnam & Sons, 1893; reprinted NY: Burt Franklin, 1970), 4:393.

Resource(s):

- American Family Association – Phone: (662) 844-5036; Website: afa.net
- Concerned Women for America – Phone: (202) 488-7000; Website: cwfa.org
- Eagle Forum – Phone: (618) 433-8990; Website: eagleforum.org
- Family Research Council – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- Focus on the Family – Phone: (800) A-FAMILY (232-6459); Website: focusonthefamily.com
- National Right to Life Committee – Phone: (202) 626-8800; Website: nrlc.org

Email and Text Blasts

A reliable and direct means of communicating with the members of the congregation is by email and text. Emails are becoming less and less effective because everyone's Inbox is full and

overflowing. Text is better, but not as many people will give out their phone number. A great tool for sending group message by text through the *Remind App*. You can set it up to either allow or not allow a response. Obviously, not allowing a response will make the communication more streamlined and most members will appreciate just a one-way message. You should seek to get the pastor's approval for obtaining email addresses and cell phone numbers from interested members and communicating through those means. Just be mindful that everyone is just as busy as you are and we all fight information overload. Keep communications short and simple and only send them when action is desperately needed. All of the Team members would work to cultivate the lists, but only one of the Team members should work to maintain and send to them.

Resource(s): remind.com

Encourage Fair and Unbiased Journalism

Too often, Christians complain about the media when a story is reported with an anti-Christian bias, but they forget to applaud a reporter when an accurate report is given. While it is important that we continue to demand fair and unbiased reporting in the media, be sure to let members of the media know when you appreciate their efforts. It just might encourage them to keep up the good work.

Resource(s):

- Media Research Center – Website: mrc.org

Encourage Young People to Make an Impact

There are many wonderful Christian youth groups and ministries all across America that your children can get involved in. Find out what ministries are active in your area, and encourage your children to join in the excitement. Some of these youth ministries teach young people how to effectively share their faith with their friends and classmates. Some get them involved in prayer, others get them involved in the governmental process, and still others are just great Fun—incorporating lots of fellowship with other Christian youth in a Christ-centered environment.

Resource(s):

- First Priority of America – Phone: (888) 808-3762; Website: fpofamerica.com
- Forge Leadership Network – Phone: (800) 481-5024; Website: forgeleadership.org
- Leadership Institute – Phone: (703) 247-2000; Website: leadershipinstitute.org
- Summit Ministries – Phone: (866) 786-6483; Website: summit.org
- TeenPact: Phone – (804) 323-7051; Website: teenpact.com
- Worldview Academy – Phone: (800) 241-1123; Website: worldview.org
- YoungLife – Phone: (877) 438-9572; Website: younglife.org

Facebook Your Friends

If you are on Facebook, you can use it as a powerful tool to get across the pro-family message.

Enter some thoughts in your “status” about what is on your mind about your concerns for your community, your state, and our nation. Think of a provocative topic in the news that has a moral dimension and create a post to start discussion. Here’s an example: “Should ‘We the People’ fund Planned Parenthood, America’s largest abortion provider, to the tune of over \$360 million tax dollars a year?” You could also donate your status to a pro-life or pro-family group who will automatically post on your Facebook page on a regular basis. Also, you could create a Facebook group in your community of like-minded friends who are concerned about moral issues and plan “events” for activism. The possibilities are endless!

Resource(s):

- Facebook – Website: [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com)

Fight Hunger by Contributing and Volunteering

Hunger is a huge problem around the world, and Christians need to follow the biblical mandate to help (Matt. 25:35). One way is by contributing to the World Hunger Fund. Even in America, hunger is a problem. Hundreds of people in larger communities depend on food banks for basic food supplies when they are homeless or their paychecks don’t last through the end of the month. Most food banks and soup kitchens need volunteers to package and distribute food, stock shelves, and perform other tasks. Assisting the less fortunate in our communities provides a wonderful opportunity for Christians to demonstrate Christ’s love in a practical way. Find out where the nearest food bank or soup kitchen is in your community and get your church involved, too.

Resource(s):

- Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund – Website: [globalhungerrelief.com](https://www.globalhungerrelief.com)
- America’s Second Harvest – Phone: (800) 771-2303; Website: [feedingamerica.org](https://www.feedingamerica.org)
- Samaritan’s Purse – Phone: (828) 262-1980; Website: [samaritanspurse.org](https://www.samaritanspurse.org)
- World Relief – Phone: (800) 535-5433; Website: [worldrelief.org](https://www.worldrelief.org)
- Food for the Hungry – Phone: (800) 2-HUNGERS; Website: [fh.org](https://www.fh.org)

Fight Pornography: What You Can Do

Pornography is the “pink elephant in the pew”—it’s a big and embarrassing subject that no one wants to talk about. Yet, pornography harms all those who come in contact with it. It traps consumers into addiction and victimizes women who “perform” in a cycle of sex trafficking and abuse. The church not only needs to stand against the proliferation of pornography but needs to reach out and help those who are victims of it, especially in the church.

Resources(s):

- Enough is Enough – Website: [enough.org](https://www.enough.org)
- Fight the New Drug – Website: [fightthenewdrug.org](https://www.fightthenewdrug.org)

- National Center on Sexual Exploitation – Website: endsexualexploitation.org

Fight for Tax Reform

Many feel that the United States tax code is beyond burdensome and has become downright tyrannous. The Internal Revenue Service is possibly our most powerful government agency, and citizens have very little recourse if they are found to be in error. Find out more about what you can do!

Resource(s):

- Citizens for an Alternative Tax System – Phone: (800) 767-7577
- Freedom Works – Website: freedomworks.org
- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- The National Taxpayers Union Foundation – Phone: (703) 683-5700; Website: ntu.org
- Americans for Prosperity – Phone: (703) 224-3200; Website: americansforprosperity.org

Form a Culture Impact Coalition in Your Community

One of the most effective ways to make an impact in your community is to form a group or coalition. The fact is, many of your friends and neighbors would like to do something about the issues affecting their communities, but the problems seem overwhelming. When friends and neighbors unite, the problems are not so daunting. There is strength in numbers.

Resource(s):

- CommunityImpactTeam.org
- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org

Give Blood or Host a Blood Donation Drive

Your local blood bank is always looking for individuals to donate blood. The entire process usually takes less than one hour—it’s time well spent, since the results could save a life! It is also a great witness. Your church could be the host, which would give an additional opportunity to show the community the love of Jesus in a practical way.

Resource(s):

- American Red Cross – Website: redcross.org

Hand Out Voter’s Guides

Several pro-family organizations produce informative “voter guides” to help citizens understand the candidate’s positions on various issues that impact our communities. These voter guides are free to the public and are an excellent way to educate voters. It is perfectly legal to distribute non-partisan voter guides at your church—and it will not jeopardize your church’s 501(c)3

status. Make sure to get permission from your pastor before handing out voter guides or distributing them in your church bulletin.

Resource(s):

- Family Policy Alliance – Website: Familypolicyalliance.com
- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- Liberty Counsel (for 501(c)3 information for pastors/leaders) – Phone: (407) 875-1776; Website: lc.org

Help Elderly Neighbors

Are any of your neighbors elderly? Often those who are infirm or ill become shut-ins and cannot get out of their homes by themselves. Stop by for a visit. Bring a meal to them or have them over for dinner. Offer a ride to church or get them a tape of the service. Volunteer to run an errand, pick up a prescription, or take them to the market. Most of all, take the time to show them you care. Christian love may open the door for you to share your faith.

Help End Abortion

Over 3,000 unborn children are murdered every day in America. Take a stand against this modern American Holocaust!

- Pray for God to change the hearts of abortionists, judges, our Supreme Court justices, and your elected representatives so that they might see abortion for the real evil that it is.
- Consider Sidewalk counseling outside an abortion clinic.
- Begin a pregnancy support center or at least offer counseling and other forms of ministry to women contemplating abortion (see related Project).
- Air pro-life commercials on your local television stations and place pro-life messages on billboards.
- Promote a Sanctity of Human Life Sunday in your church (see related Project).
- Participate in a Life-Chain event (see related Project).
- Support pro-life activist groups that are fighting to expose the abortion industry (see Resources below).
- Support Abby Johnson's ministry for abortion workers that want out of the industry (abortionworker.com).
- Choose life! Deuteronomy 30:19 says: "Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, that you and your descendants might live!" (NLT)

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- Care Net – Phone: (703) 554-8734; Website: care-net.org
- Heartbeat International – Phone: (888) 550-7577; Website: heartbeatinternational.org
- National Right to Life – Phone: (202) 626-8800; Website: nrlc.org
- OptionLine – Phone: (800) 712-HELP (4357); Website: optionline.org

- And Then There Were None – Phone: (888) 570-5501; Website: abortionworker.com
- Center for Medical Progress – Phone: (949) 734-0859; Website: centerformedicalprogress.org
- Live Action – Phone: (323) 454-3304; Website: liveaction.org
- Sidewalk Advocates for Life – Website: sidewalkadvocates.org

To find local pregnancy resource centers, go to care-net.org/find-a-pregnancy-center

Holiday Invitations to Church

Most people are not opposed to going to church, but they may need a reason to go. Holidays or church events give you a “special” reason to invite a friend or neighbor to attend with you. Christmas carols have a way of warming hearts and breaking down the barriers that divide neighbors. So, serenade your neighbors and create an opportunity to share that Jesus is the reason for the season. Remember, any time is a good time to invite a friend, neighbor, or family member to church.

Host a Block Party with a Purpose

Celebrate any holiday—4th of July, Memorial Day, etc. by inviting your neighbors to a block-wide barbecue and picnic. Some get police permission to barricade off a street, which encourages interaction. If your event is done well, it could become an annual gathering that gets everyone involved and helps strengthen your community. It can also be an excellent opportunity for you to share your faith.

Host a Summer Bible Club

When kids are out of school and many parents are at their wit’s end trying to come up with things to keep them busy, a Backyard Bible Club could be the perfect solution! Similar to a Vacation Bible School in format, Backyard Bible Clubs involve fun, games, contests, and simple art projects as a platform for sharing the Gospel with young people in your neighborhood.

Resource(s):

- Vacation Bible School (Lifeway Christian Resources) – Website: lifeway.com
- Child Evangelism Fellowship – Phone: (636) 456-4321 ext. 2050; Website: cefonline.com

Initiate a Community Impact Email Network

In our hi-tech times, one of the most effective ways of mobilizing your church or your association is to set up an e-mail or Impact Network. Microsoft Outlook Express can serve as your basic software tool. Within Outlook, you can set up your network of e-mail addresses from people who have given them to you. While the address book is all inclusive, the networks may

be selective. For example, you may set up a network just for your CIT, one for the church, one for the association, and one that includes all who have signed up for your network.

Here are a few principles that will help guide you in creating a successful Impact Network:

- Be very selective in what sources you use for information and action items. Only subscribe to evangelical organizations that have been found to be reliable sources of issues information.
- Be selective in what you send people. When you receive information and action items from these various sources, you need to evaluate, sort, and filter them according to the following criteria. Is the information or action item: 1) Pertinent to the CIT and our Mission Statement; 2) Enumerated as one of the Team's agreed upon core moral issues or values; 3) Urgent (send a lower percentage of information items and a higher percentage of info + action items); 4) Non-partisan in nature.
- Be extremely sensitive as to how much you send. You do not want the people on your network to feel overloaded and then asked to be removed from your network. However, if such a request is made, please honor it promptly.
- Be sure to send out success story information. Encourage your network members that they are making a difference.

This can be one of our most effective tools in your arsenal to awaken, inform, energize, equip, and mobilize Christians.

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- American Family Association (AFA) – Website: afa.net
- Family Policy Alliance – Phone: (866) 655-4545; Website: familypolicyalliance.com

Invest in Troubled Youth

There are many teens and young adults struggling with addiction. It is important to combat these issues while they are still young and have their lives ahead of them. Teen Challenge aims to do just that. You can minister to these teens by donating, praying, or volunteering.

Resource(s):

- Teen Challenge – Phone: 417-581-2181; Website: teenchallengeusa.com

Join a “Moms In Prayer” Group

“Moms in Prayer” is an international effort that unites mothers of school-age children in prayer. These groups are made up of two or more moms who meet for one hour each week to pray for their children, their children's schools, the teachers, and the administrators. These mothers meet with the purpose of standing in the gap for their children through prayer. America needs prayer back in its schools—and this is an exciting way for moms to make an impact in your child's public education!

Resource(s):

- Moms in Prayer International – Phone: 855-769-7729; Website: momsinprayer.org

Know Your Rights in the Public School

The phrase “separation of church and state” has been used to silence students across America. So many stories have circulated about Christian students being persecuted at public schools that many Christians have stopped speaking up about their faith, largely because they do not know their legally protected rights. However, if students know their legal rights, they will not and cannot be silenced. Among other rights, students can read the Bible during non-instructional time, organize prayer groups and Bible studies, say grace before meals and snacks, and express their beliefs in homework, artwork, and other assignments. If you or your child go to a public school, this knowledge is essential. Take the time to learn your rights as a Christian Citizen in the public school system. If your public school is infringing on your rights as a believer, consult one of the resources below.

Resource(s):

- Alliance Defending Freedom – Phone: (800) 835-5233; Website: adflegal.org
- American Center for Law and Justice – Phone: (800) 296-4529; Website: aclj.org
- Liberty Counsel – Phone: (800) 671-1776; Website: lc.org
- First Liberty – Phone: (972) 941-4444; Website: libertyinstitute.org
- Thomas More Law Center – Phone: (734) 827-2001; Website: thomasmore.org

Launch a Community Marriage Policy

Modesto, California became the first city to adopt a community marriage policy in 1986. Since that time, the divorce rate in Modesto has fallen 16 percent, and more than one hundred communities across America have created their own versions of Modesto’s policy. These “community marriage policies” are created and enforced by community clergy and typically require that engaged couples undergo several months of premarital counseling before marriage. Speak with your pastor about organizing local clergy to develop a united “marriage policy” or to get a pre-marital counseling program started in your church.

Resource(s):

- FamilyLife – Phone: (800) FL-TODAY (358-6329); Website: familylife.com
- Marriage Savers – Phone: (301) 978-7105; Website: marriagesavers.org

Link with a Pro-Family Ministry

There are several excellent evangelical, pro-family organizations geared toward helping their members get involved at the grassroots level and making a difference in the future course of America. Again, the list below is not exhaustive, but these ministries are a good place to start.

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- American Family Association – Phone: (662) 844-5036; Website: afa.net
- Family Policy Alliance – Phone: (866) 655-4545; Website: Familypolicyalliance.com
- Concerned Women for America – Phone: (202) 488-7000; Website: concernedwomen.org
- Eagle Forum – Phone: (618) 433-8990; Website: eagleforum.org

Mentoring Ministry for Newly Married Couples

In today’s “no-fault” divorce culture, young couples struggle to stay together. By starting a marriage mentoring ministry in your church or community, you could provide young couples with helpful advice and counsel. Link some newlyweds with Christian couples who have been married 20 years or longer. Remember, “... at the beginning, the Creator ‘made them male and female.’ For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and the two will become one flesh’; So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate” (Matt. 19:4b-6).

Resource(s):

- Family Life – Phone: (800) FL-TODAY (358-6329); Website: familylife.com
- Marriage Savers – Phone: (301) 978-7105; Website: marriagesavers.org

Minister Help to the Hurting

Christ came to heal the hurting, so churches are an ideal place to offer community outreach focused on helping people who feel trapped in dangerous behaviors or who need support through an emotionally trying time. There are national support groups for those struggling with alcohol, drug, and gambling addictions. Your church might also want to start a group focused on ministering to those who have gone through divorce or who are caregivers for disabled loved ones. Look for opportunities to reach out to believers and non-believers alike, who need someone to offer unconditional love, and to believe with them that they can win the battle they are facing!

Resource(s):

- Alcoholics Anonymous – Phone: Check your local directory; Website: aa.org
- DivorceCare – Phone: (800) 489-7778; Website: divorcecare.com
- Gamblers Anonymous – Phone: (626) 960-3500; Website: gamblersanonymous.org
- GriefShare – Phone: (800) 395-5755; Website: griefshare.org
- Narcotics Anonymous – Phone: (818) 773-9999; Website: na.org

Monitor Textbooks in Public Schools

Most school districts are required by law to announce to taxpayers the curriculum the district will be using during the next school year. Take the time to carefully check the books being used in your local public school. You might be surprised what you find. Remember, these are our children and we are responsible for them, even while they are in school. Voice your concerns about the textbooks in your child’s school to the principal and to your local school board. Check with your school board to see if there is a curriculum review board you can join so you can have

an influence on the curriculum before it is chosen, instead of after.

Resource(s):

- Education Research Analysts – Phone: (903) 753-5993; Website: textbookreviews.org

Network with other Churches and Pastors

Communities divided by cultural and economic differences have experienced dramatic reconciliation when pastors and church members of different denominations and ethnic backgrounds come together for times of prayer and fellowship. Talk to your pastor about starting a community wide prayer event. It may start small, but prayer gatherings like that can have a dramatic impact! Remember, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28).

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council’s Watchmen Pastors – Website: WatchmenPastors.org

Observe Anti-Gambling Sunday

Observed the third Sunday in September, Anti-Gambling Sunday will help focus your church on the serious moral problems related to gambling. Take the lead in preventing gambling from invading your community. Organize a grassroots effort to inform others of its devastating effects—an increase in domestic violence, child abuse, neglect, compulsive gambling, broken families, financial ruin, and other social ills. Don’t be misled by promises of the prosperity that gambling might bring to your community. The net impact is always negative, and the only one who wins is the gambling industry. As they say in Las Vegas: “You can’t beat the house.”

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- Focus on the Family – Phone: (800) A-FAMILY (232-6459); Website: focusonthefamily.com/lifechallenges/abuse-and-addiction
- National Council on Problem Gambling – Phone: (800) 522-4700; Website: ncpgambling.org

Observe Christian Heritage Week

Members of your community may be unaware of America’s Judeo-Christian heritage. Work with your church, community, and civic groups to help organize an official observance of Christian Heritage Week, which is usually held Thanksgiving week. Educate yourself about the true facts of America’s Christian Heritage. A wealth of materials is available in the form of books, videos, pamphlets, and tapes.

Resource(s):

- America’s Christian Heritage Week – Phone: (304) 536-9029; Website: achw.org
- Christian Heritage Ministries – Phone: (703) 455-0333; Website: christianheritagemins.org

- World History Institute – Website: worldhistoryinstitute.com
- Wallbuilders – Website: wallbuilders.com

Observe the National Day of Prayer

Each year, the first Thursday in May has been officially designated as the “National Day of Prayer.” If your community is not already participating in this important day of observance, help create a forum (breakfast, luncheon, or evening program) to highlight the impact that prayer has made in our nation’s history and continues to make today. Ask your pastor and other members of your church to participate in this very important event.

Resource(s):

- National Day of Prayer Task Force – Phone: (800) 444-8828; Website: nationaldayofprayer.org

Observe Black History Month

The second Sunday in February is set aside to address the problems of racial prejudice and injustice in America and throughout the world. Critical progress has been made in the area of civil rights in America. Persons may no longer be discriminated against on the basis of skin color in employment, housing, etc. While these laws are important, much work still needs to be done, especially with respect to people’s attitudes toward other races. Your CIT can assist your Pastor in leading your local church to confront heart issues about racial and ethnic prejudices.

Resource(s):

- Frederick Douglass Foundation – Website: tfd.org
- Douglas Leadership Institute – Phone: (301)965-0907; Website: dlinstitute.org

Observe Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

Focus attention on the sanctity of life through “Sanctity of Life Sunday,” observed on the third Sunday in January near the anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court’s January 22, 1973 *Roe v. Wade* ruling legalizing abortion. Use a Bulletin Insert to alert the congregation to current life-related issues. Ask your pastor to preach a sermon on the Scripture’s view of the sanctity of life. The format can fit each church’s needs—as long as it fights against the horrors of the abortion industry, the evils of cloning and research using pre-born stem cells, the tragedy of assisted suicide, and also promotes the preciousness of human life made in the image of God.

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- Life Issues Institute – Phone: (513) 729-3600; Website: lifeissues.org
- National Right to Life – Phone: (202) 626-8800; Website: nrlc.org

Observe World Hunger Day

The second Sunday in October has been designated World Hunger Day. The purpose of this emphasis is to educate Christians about the needs of the millions in America and throughout the world who are starving and hungry. An offering is encouraged to alleviate starvation and hunger.

Resource(s):

- Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund – Website: globalhungerrelief.com
- Feeding America – Phone: (800) 771-2303; Website: feedingamerica.org
- Samaritan’s Purse – Phone: (828) 262-1980; Website: samaritanspurse.org
- World Relief – Phone: (800) 535-5433; Website: worldrelief.org
- Food for the Hungry – Phone: (800) 535-5433; Website: fh.org

Offer Hope and Healing for Those Who Identify As Homosexual

Deliverance from the homosexual lifestyle is possible through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Thousands have left the gay and lesbian lifestyle, married, and had families of their own. Their experiences and these organizations can offer hope and healing to a friend or family member struggling with this sin. Those practicing homosexuality can change, but they may need your help, encouragement, support, and prayers.

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council (FRC) – Website: frc.org
- Focus on the Family – Website: focusonthefamily.com
- Hope for Wholeness – Website: hopeforwholeness.org
- PFOX – Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays – Website: pfox.org
- Restored Hope Network – Website: restoredhopenetwork.org
- Courage – Website: couragerc.org

Organize Your Precinct

America has been conveniently organized into precincts. With a little time and effort, you can organize the precinct in your neighborhood so that there will be a significant impact on Election Day voter turnout in your area. One sure method of getting out the vote is to send a letter to each of the voters in your precinct encouraging them to register and to vote. Another is to hand out literature at your precinct that supports the candidate of your prayerful choice.

Resource(s):

- Contact your political party’s local office and find out about becoming a precinct captain.
- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- American Family Association – Phone: (662) 844-5036; Website: afa.net
- Family Policy Alliance – Phone: (866) 655-4545; Website: familypolicyalliance.com
- Concerned Women for America – Phone: (202) 488-7000; Website: cwfa.org
- Eagle Forum – Phone: (618) 433-8990; Website: eagleforum.org

Organize a Welcome Wagon

Offer various materials to newcomers in your neighborhood to help acquaint them with the local area. Collect information and telephone numbers from shopping centers (merchants would love to give you coupons), dry cleaners, grocery stores, mechanics, doctors, dentists, police and fire stations, and city hall. This is also a perfect time to invite new neighbors to your church and give them a voter registration form so they can register to vote at their new address!

Participate in the “Life Chain”

Each year, on the first Sunday of October, thousands of Americans across the country spend one hour of their day standing for life. Across the country, participants in the annual Life Chain stand for one hour along major streets in their cities and towns, silently holding signs proclaiming truth: “Abortion Kills Children,” “Abortion Hurts Women,” and “Adoption: The Loving Option.” The Life Chain, started in 1987 in California, now involves hundreds of groups that gather annually to make this peaceful statement for life. Many people dismiss local pro-life communities because they have never seen them. Show your town what the pro-life community looks like and share the truth about abortion in this simple, yet effective, way. Remember, “Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter. If you say, ‘But we knew nothing about this,’ does not He who weighs the hearts consider it? Does not He who guards your soul know it? Will He not repay each person according to what he has done?” (Proverbs 24:11-12).

Resource(s):

- National Life Chain – Phone: (530) 674-5068; Website: nationallifechain.org

Partner with Law Enforcement to Help the Hurting

Resource(s):

- RECAP – Phone: (702) 387-1010; Website: 10000kids.org

Partner with Pro-Life Groups

There are several pro-life groups that are working to provide resources for the pro-life movement that include alternatives to abortion. By Partnering with these groups, you can help fight the abortion industry.

Resource(s):

- Human Coalition – Phone: (214) 295-7301; Website: humancoalition.org
- Care Net – Phone: (703) 554-8734; Website: care-net.org
- Psalm 139 project – Website: psalm139project.org
- Save the Storks – Website: savethestorks.com

Place Pro-Family & Christian Books in Libraries

Most public libraries are strapped for funds and are more than happy to take donations of books from local citizens. If you know of pro-family and Christian books that would be helpful resources for others in your community, donate them to your local library.

Resource(s):

- Lifeway Christian Resources – Website: Lifeway.com

Pray for Elected Officials

Paul admonished: “I urge then first of all that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:1-4). We are to pray for our president, our congressmen, our judges, our governors, our mayors, our councilmen, our law enforcement officials, etc.—for all who have a place of authority. We pray that God would give them wisdom—wisdom to lead our nation according to Judeo-Christian principles rooted in biblical authority. Above all we pray that they would come to Christ and be saved (v 4). It is only through a relationship with Jesus as Lord that they will lead in such a way that we as believers can live “peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness” (v 2).

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council Prayer Targets – Website: WatchmenPastors.org
- Call2Fall – Website: Call2Fall.com
- Congressional Prayer Caucus – Website: cpcfoundation.com
- Intercessors for America – Phone: (800) 872-7729; Website: ifapray.org
- Presidential Prayer Team – Website: presidentialprayerteam.org

Pray for the Persecuted Church

The persecution of the Christian Church in today’s world has reached monumental proportions. As Americans, it is sometimes easy to forget the sufferings of our Christian brothers and sisters in other parts of the world. Since 1996 there has been a designated day each year for churches to join together in specific prayer for the persecuted Church. If your church is not one of the thousands already participating in the annual International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church, gather information and talk to your pastor about this opportunity to minister to the worldwide fellowship of believers.

Resources:

- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church – Website: idop.org
- Voice of the Martyrs – Website: persecution.com
- Jubilee Campaign – Website: jubileecampaign.org
- Institute on Religion and Democracy – Website: theird.org

Promote Biblical Sex Education

Too often, the “safe sex” argument lacks an abstinence-based alternative. The Southern Baptist Church has established a nationwide program, “True Love Waits,” that has encouraged thousands of young people to commit to celibacy until marriage. The widespread popularity of this program clearly shows that many young people today realize that “safe sex” is not a viable option. This program can be adapted to your church, school, or community group. Contact school officials to offer your presentation to students.

Resource(s):

- “True Love Waits” Campaign – Phone: (800) 458-2772; Website: lifeway.com/en/product-family/true-love-waits
- Enlighten Communications, Inc. – Phone: (303) 888-6876; Website: enlightencom.com
- National Abstinence Clearinghouse – Phone: (605) 335-3643; Website: abstinence.net
- Medical Institute for Sexual Health – Phone: (512) 328-6286; Website: medinstitute.org
- Respect, Inc. – Website: sexrespect.com
- Teen-Aid – Phone: (509) 482-2868; Website: teen-aid.com

Promote Porn Filters in Public Libraries

Hardcore pornography is available on the internet in many of our public libraries. Pictures and videos of some of the most perverted and base sexual behavior can be accessed over the internet by anyone, including our children. Don’t let your public library turn into an XXX-rated adult book store. There are excellent and inexpensive software packages and internet services available that filter pornography effectively. Demand that a filtering system be installed. While you are at it, consider using a filtering program on your home PC, too. Sometimes adults viewing pornography in libraries leave pornographic images on the screen. Urge your librarians to vigilantly check the library’s internet access computers so they can protect unsuspecting children from viewing pornography.

Resource(s):

- American Family Association – Phone: (662) 844-5036; Website: afa.net

Protect Your Family from Porn Spam

Have you ever been the target of completely unsolicited, sexually graphic e-mail, a.k.a. “porn spam”? If so, you’ve probably thought that there should be some way to stop the offensive barrage of images invading your otherwise family-friendly in-box. Instead of merely hitting that delete button, try some proactive measures to counteract and ultimately defeat this online practice. Use the below resources for some quick and easy tips for taking this blight out of your life.

Resource(s):

- National Center on Sexual Exploitation – Website: endsexualexploitation.org
- Enough is Enough Ministry – Website: enough.org

- Covenant Eyes – Website: covenanteyes.com

Provide a Community Impact Center for your Church

In consultation with your church’s leadership, set up a booth at your church to help raise awareness of certain moral and ethical issues. The booth can be elaborate with internet access and multimedia capability, or as simple as a draped table. Gather information, brochures, pamphlets, and articles that express the biblical perspective on social and moral issues and make this material available. Inform your congregation about important issues such as abortion, stem cell research, cloning, euthanasia, the LGBT agenda, religious liberty issues, gambling, pornography, world hunger, entertainment industry, news media, etc. Make sure you check this information for reliability and biblical accuracy. Share your elected officials’ stands on these issues. Also provide action items such as a sign-up sheet for your network, petitions, contact information for elected officials, etc. You might even want to take your booth out into the community at events such as the county fair, 4th of July gatherings, September 11th remembrances, etc.

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- American Family Association – Phone: (662) 844-5036; Website: afa.net
- Focus on the Family – Phone: (800) A-FAMILY (232-6459); Website: focusonthefamily.com
- National Right to Life Committee – Phone: (202) 626-8800; Website: nrlc.org

Purchase “Choose Life” License Plates

In 1996, Marion County (Fla.) Commissioner Randy Harris had a vision for an outreach that would encourage women in unplanned pregnancies to consider adoption as a choice. His idea became reality in 1999 when Governor Jeb Bush signed into law the Choose Life license plate—America’s first official license plate that raises funds and awareness in support of women who commit to having their babies and placing them for adoption rather than choosing abortion. Funds generated by Florida’s Choose Life specialty license plate assist these women with the expenses of a full-term pregnancy, until their children can be placed with an adoptive family. By 2003, groups in 41 states had begun the process of starting a Choose Life license plate effort of their own: eight states had already passed legislation for the plate, while 15 states’ legislatures were considering a Choose Life license plate bill. Get involved in bringing this powerful outreach to your state!

Resource(s):

- Choose Life, Inc. (contact Russ Amerling) – Phone: (352) 624-2854; Website: choose-life.org

Quit Watching So Much Television

The average American watches four hours of television every day! Consider turning the TV off for one night every week and having a TV-free family night. See what happens when you unplug

the television for one week (or more)! Taking a family walk, playing ball, bike riding, writing letters, or just spending time talking and listening to your family can make a positive impact on your family dynamics. How about inviting another family over for a night of board games? There is no telling what might happen...you might even forget to plug the TV back in!

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- American Family Association – Phone: (662) 844-5036; Website: afa.net
- Media Research Center – Website: mrc.org
- Parents Television Council – Phone: (800)882-6868; Website: parentstv.org
- TV-Turnoff Network: Phone – Website: tvturnoff.net

Recommit Your Family to Christian Basics

In your efforts to transform America through Christ, remember to keep your priorities straight. Begin with a commitment to God and to your family. Develop a Family Mission Statement. Find time for regular Bible devotions. Be sure to eat meals together and plan special family events. Take a family vacation and do a mission project. Stress to your family that all of life is to be under the rule of Christ. Time with your family is essential in today's fast paced world. Now is the time to build family memories that will last a lifetime, and will impact generations to come. "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Josh. 24:15).

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- Family to Family (Lifeway) – Website: lifeway.com
- North American Mission Board – Website: namb.net
- Focus on the Family – Phone: (800) A-FAMILY (232-6459); Website: focusonthefamily.com

Register to Vote, Then Vote your Values!

For Christians, voting is more than a privilege. It is a serious stewardship responsibility. "We the People" includes you! The sad fact is that less than half of professing Christians vote in a given election. Some would say, "What's the difference, my one vote doesn't really count." Can one vote make a difference? Yes, it can!

- In 1801, one vote in the U.S. House broke the tie between presidential candidates Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr. By the way, Burr was later charged with treason!
- In 1839, one vote made Marcus Morton governor of Massachusetts and earned him the nickname "Landslide."
- In 1868, one vote saved President Andrew Johnson from being removed from office.
- In 1876, one vote in the Electoral College gave Rutherford B. Hayes the presidency.
- In 1941, one vote extended the active service provision in the Selective Service Act (Draft) just four months before the attack on Pearl Harbor.
- In 2000, we had one of the most closely contested presidential elections in American history, and some people are still arguing about who won!

- In 2017, a Virginia House of Delegates race ended in a tie after more than 23,000 votes. The winner had to be randomly pulled from a hat. A Republican was declared the winner, which gave the GOP control of the State House by one seat.

Your vote can and does make a difference. So take the time to register to vote and get educated on the issues and candidates. Examine each candidate's character, not just his credentials, his positions, not just his politics, his principles, not just his party, and weigh each candidate over against God's word, then vote for the one who most closely represents your Christian values.

Resource(s):

- CommunityImpactTeam.org
- FRC Action – Website: FRCAction.org
- Democratic National Committee – Phone: (202) 863-8000; Website: democrats.org
- Republican National Committee – Phone: (202) 863-8500; Website: gop.com
- Contact the local office of your Supervisor of Elections for a list of elected officials in your area.

Run for a Local School Board Seat

If your community has an elected school board, consider running in the next election. You might be surprised how little it takes to win a position that will give you an opportunity to make a powerful impact on your local public schools. This is a great way for you to make certain that Christian students' First Amendment right to freedom of religious expression is protected and to fight back against the incursion of extremist LGBT propaganda that is infiltrating sex ed. Consider serving on your local school board and having an actual vote on the policies and procedures that affect your school district.

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council Action – Website: FRCAction.org

Serve On State & Local Boards

There are literally hundreds of boards, authorities, councils, agencies, and commissions in your state. Many of these have members appointed by the governor from across the state. Others are county-wide or at the local level. There are Planning and Zoning Boards, Housing Authorities and Curriculum Review Boards, Parks and Recreation Advisory Boards and Commissions on the Status of Women. There are boards that address issues involving the elderly and children, the environment, health, housing, and just about any other issue that might be of interest to you. Serving on a governmental board or commission is an excellent way to serve your community and have an impact on our culture. Remember, our elected representatives appoint the citizens who serve and make decisions that affect you—on the state, county, and local boards.

Resource(s):

- For information on statewide appointments and a list of vacancies, call your governor's Appointment Office. For county and local municipal appointments and vacancies, call the appropriate county or local office.

Share Your Faith

If we could do one thing to make an impact and transform America, what would it be? Obey the Great Commission. Share your faith. That is our mission. It is the “main thing.” If you introduce a man to Jesus, and he surrenders his life to Christ, and then is disciplined in the Christian world view, he will become your friend and fellow soldier. If you don’t share Christ with him, he will likely remain your opponent on the cultural battlefield. Evangelism must be our number one strategy in transforming America. There are many excellent evangelistic tools that have a proven track record, such as Evangelism Explosion. Find one that works for you and share your faith.

Resource(s):

- Evangelism Explosion International – Website: evangelismexplosion.org
- Got Life? – Website: gotlifeministries.com
- Campus Crusade for Christ – Website: cru.org

Sponsor “Candidate Night” at Church

Candidates for office are usually eager to speak at events that allow them to address their constituents. Send a registered letter inviting local candidates from all political parties to your church (with proper approval) and get friends and neighbors to attend. This is an excellent opportunity to hear each candidate’s position on various topics and to have them hear your concerns. Be sure to comply with the political guidelines for churches and other 501(c)3 organizations.

Resource(s):

- American Center for Law and Justice – Website: aclj.org
- Family Policy Alliance – Website: familypolicyalliance.com

Sponsor a Child

Proverbs 22:9 says, “The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor.” As Christians, it is not only our duty but our privilege to help the poor and hurting. One simple way that you and your team can do that is to Sponsor a Child. By sponsoring a child on a monthly basis you help them receive education, food, and clothing. In addition, you provide help to their family and community. You can either sponsor a child on your own or team up with several people in your church to sponsor a child or two.

Resource(s):

- Compassion International – Phone: (800) 336-7676; Website: compassion.com
- Food for the Hungry – Phone: (800) 248-6437; Website: fh.org/sponsorship

Sponsor a Financial Seminar

Reach your friends and neighbors with practical financial advice by sponsoring a Christian financial seminar at your church or community center. This will offer another opportunity to

share your faith.

Resource(s):

- Crown Financial Ministries – Website: crown.org
- Financial Peace Seminars – Website: daveramsey.com

Start a Men’s Ministry

Consider starting a men’s ministry in your church or office. Promise Keepers is a Christian outreach aimed at building men of integrity. Through stadium conferences, ongoing local small groups, educational seminars, resource materials, and local churches, Promise Keepers encourages men to live godly lives and to keep seven basic promises of commitment. Promise Keepers seeks to unite Christian men of all races, denominations, ages, cultures, and socio-economic groups, believing that accountability relationships among men are critical in helping them become “promise keepers” in their relationships with God, wives, children, each other, and communities.

Resource(s):

- Connecting Business Men to Christ – Phone: (800) 566-CBMC (2262); Website: cbmc.com
- Promise Keepers – Phone: (303) 964-7600; Website: promisekeepers.org

Start a Neighborhood Watch Program

Local law enforcement agencies can help you get started. Along with raising awareness about public safety, you will have the opportunity to get more acquainted with your neighbors!

Resource(s):

- National Neighborhood Watch: A program of the National Sheriff’s Association – Website: nnw.org

Submit Pro-Family Model Legislation

Save your state legislator time and effort by submitting model legislation on key issues such as marriage, divorce, LGBT extremism, and abortion. Pro-family organizations are developing model legislation that can be easily adapted to your state. Christians must take action to counteract the groups in our society who are actively seeking to redefine the traditional family in America. Parental rights are being watered down. We must introduce legislation that supports the traditional family and traditional pro-family values.

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- American Family Association – Phone: (662) 844-5036; Website: afa.net
- Family Policy Alliance – Website: familypolicyalliance.com

Subscribe to Christian Literature

Keeping on top of current Christian events is a challenge. Very little reporting from a Christian perspective is available in the mainstream media. At the same time, there are a growing number of ministries that offer in-depth analysis of issues and biblical insights on social, political, and economic trends of our times. We must stay informed if we are going to be effective as the salt and light God has commanded us to be. When you are finished with the publication, you may want to pass it on, or place it in a waiting room as a witness.

Resource(s):

- *American Family Association Journal* – Phone: (662) 844-5036; Website: afajournal.org
- *Citizen Magazine* – Website: focusonthefamily.com/socialissues/citizen-magazine
- *WORLD Magazine* – Phone: (800) 951-NEWS (6397); Website: world.wng.org
- *God's World News (WORLD Magazine for kids)* – Website: gwnews.com
- *Decision Magazine* – Website: billygraham.org/decision-magazine
- *First Things* – Website: firstthings.com

Support a College Ministry

Nowhere is the battle for the minds of America's young people waged more fiercely than on our college campuses. Most college students are far from home and the support system provided by familiar surroundings. Many are asked to question everything they have ever believed, and most are not equipped for this battle. Fortunately, several Christian organizations are providing these searching students with biblical answers to life's biggest questions. However, the existence of these organizations depends on people, like you, who have a similar passion for offering truth to young people on America's college campuses. By supporting these organizations, you offer truth to the young people that are America's future.

Resource(s):

- Breakpoint (Worldview) – Website: breakpoint.org
- Campus Crusade for Christ – Website: cru.org
- Fellowship of Christian Athletes – Phone: (800) 289-0909; Website: fca.org
- InterVarsity Christian Fellowship – Phone: (608) 274-7882; Website: intervarsity.org
- The Navigators – Phone: (800) 323-9400; Website: navigators.org
- Fellowship of Catholic University Students – Website: focus.org
- World View Academy – worldview.org

Support D.A.R.E. In Your Community

D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) is a drug abuse prevention education program designed to equip elementary and junior high school children with knowledge about drug abuse and the consequences of abuse. It gives them skills for resisting peer pressure to experiment with drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. Promoting the idea that prevention is the only long-term answer to drug abuse, the program now includes all 50 states and many countries. This unique program uses uniformed law enforcement officers to teach a formal curriculum to students in a classroom

setting. Contact your school and ask if they are participating in this program.

Resource(s):

- Drug Abuse Resistance and Education (D.A.R.E.) – Phone: (800) 223-DARE (3273); Website: dare.com

Support Family-Friendly Movies

Theater managers are more likely to schedule family-oriented movies if they think there is a market for them, and that they will be profitable. By calling and sending letters to the theater managers requesting more “G” and some carefully selected “PG” rated movies, and getting others to do the same, you will send them a message. Make sure you support theaters that regularly show family friendly movies.

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- Movie Guide – Phone: (805) 383-2000; Website: movieguide.org
- Focus on the Family – Phone: (800) A –FAMILY; Website: focusonthefamily.com
- Media Research Center – Website: mrc.org
- Motion Picture Association of America – Phone: (202) 293-1966; Website: mpaa.org
- Parents Television Council – Phone: (800) 882-6868; Website: parentstv.org

Support Family-Friendly Businesses

Today, many businesses are bowing to political correctness and adopting policies and promoting causes that run contrary to biblical values. Whether you know it or not, you’re casting a vote through your purchases and making a difference, sometimes in support of causes and issues that you would never support on your own. That’s where 2nd Vote comes in. They have done the research on a myriad of companies and graded them on family-friendliness. Their app is easy to download and use. Promote it to your fellow church members so that we can make that 2nd vote count for the right values.

Resource(s):

- 2nd Vote – Website: 2ndVote.com. Visit your app store and download it on your Apple or Android device.

Support an Inner-City Ministry

One of the world’s most desperate mission fields is in America’s inner cities where families are devastated by drugs and alcohol addiction, welfare dependency, crime, pornography, etc. See if your church can partner with an inner-city church and assist in ministering to the needs of their congregation. Your church could also help support a missionary to work in the inner city. Many churches have mission centers that could help coordinate your efforts. Another option is to work with organizations like Habitat for Humanity that build and refurbish homes for those who cannot afford adequate housing.

Resource(s):

- Habitat for Humanity – Phone: (229) 924-6935 or (800) HABITAT (422-4828); Website: habitat.org
- Here’s Life Inner City (a ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ) – Phone: (888) 278-7233; Website: cru.org/us/en/communities/innercity.html
- Salvation Army – Website: salvationarmyusa.org
- World Impact – Website: worldimpact.org
- Association of Gospel Rescue Missions – Website: citygatenetwork.org

Support the Jesus Film Project

How many movies do you know of that have the potential to change the course of a viewer’s life? Campus Crusade’s *Jesus* is such a movie. With the script taken straight from the Gospel of Luke, *Jesus* is recognized as the most accurate depiction of the life of Christ ever put on film. In fact, every 5.5 seconds someone indicates a decision to receive Christ as their personal Savior as a result of seeing the *Jesus* film. Many mission experts have proclaimed the *Jesus* film one of the greatest evangelistic success stories of all time. More and more quality Christian films are being produced each year. “Word-for-word” accounts of some of the Gospels and the Book of Acts are now available on DVD. These, and other films like them, make great tools for sharing the Gospel through family viewing, Bible study groups, and evangelistic outreach projects. Set aside one night a week for viewing “biblically accurate” films and watch the spiritual growth that results.

Resource(s):

- The Jesus Film Project – Phone: (407) 826-2300; Website: jesusfilm.org; Check with your local Lifeway Christian Bookstore or other Christian store.

Support a Pregnancy Resource Center

Unfortunately, many young unwed mothers are kicked out of their homes when their families find out they are pregnant. Every choice for life is a courageous one, but it is especially courageous when everyone the mother knows and loves turns against her. Pregnancy Resource Centers (PRCs) provide a safe haven during a confusing time. They offer confirmation that the choice for life is the right choice. The lives of these mothers and the lives of their babies can be influenced in a powerful way. By supporting a PRC in your community, you help encourage and provide help for those mothers who choose life for their babies rather than abortion. PRCs need your financial and material support—through donations of clothing, diapers, and other items that new mothers typically receive at baby showers. They also need your words of encouragement and counsel.

Resource(s):

- Psalm 139 Project – Website: psalm139project.org
- Bethany Christian Services – Phone: (800) BETHANY (238-4269); Website: bethany.org
- Care Net – Website: care-net.org
- Liberty Godparent Home – Website: godparent.org
- Heartbeat International – Phone: (888) 550-7577; Website: heartbeatinternational.org

- OptionLine – Phone: (800) 712-HELP (4357); Website: optionline.org
- To find local Pregnancy Resource Centers, use this website: care-net.org/find-a-pregnancy-center

Support Trail Life USA

Trail Life USA is a Christian adventure, character, and leadership program for young men and serves as a great alternative to the Boy Scouts. The K-12 program centers on outdoor experiences that build a young man’s skills and allow him to grow on a personal level and as a role model and leader for his peers. Living the Trail Life is a journey established on timeless values derived from the Bible. Their vision is to be the premier national character development organization for young men which produces Godly and responsible husbands, fathers, and citizens. Their mission is simple and clear: to guide generations of courageous young men to honor God, lead with integrity, serve others, and experience outdoor adventure. Here is the Trail Life USA Motto: “Walk Worthy” (Colossians 1:10): “... that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.”

Resource(s):

- Trail Life USA – Website: trailifeusa.com

Train as a Christian Care-Giver

Stephen Ministries trains lay people to provide confidential one-on-one care, support, and encouragement to hurting people. This international organization was started to train lay people to provide caring ministry to those in need. The ministry is based on a biblical vision of caring for people in their church and in the community. Rather than focusing on professional counseling skills, the ministry training emphasizes skills all Christians can offer to brothers and sisters in need: listening and caring.

Resource(s):

- Stephen Ministries – Phone: (314) 428-2600; Website: stephenministries.org

Tweet Your Values

If you are on Twitter, you can tweet your pro-life and pro-family values in addition to your normal updates, or re-tweet those of different organizations such as Family Research Council. Remember, you only have 140 characters, so make it short and sweet!

Resource(s):

- Twitter – Website: twitter.com
Follow Tony Perkins on Twitter: twitter.com/tperkins
Follow FRC on Twitter: twitter.com/frcdc
Follow FRC Action on Twitter: twitter.com/frcaction

Urge Enforcement of Obscenity Laws

Obscenity is illegal in the United States, yet often goes unprosecuted. You can help clean up your community by bringing offensive material to the attention of the local district attorney and urging him or her to investigate and enforce the law. For example, Zander Raines took the lead in combating a local cable company in Lebanon, Tennessee which was allowing pornographic channels to “bleed through,” exposing cable subscribers to unwanted obscenity. Raines contacted community leaders, the State Attorney General, and area pastors, who then mobilized their members to petition the cable company. By the time the Attorney General issued a restraining order, the cable company had already removed the obscene channels because of pressure from the Christian community. You can make an impact!

Resource(s):

- American Family Association (for Steps to Obscenity Law Enforcement) – Phone: (662) FAMILIES (844-5036); Website: afa.net
- National Center on Sexual Exploitation – Phone: (202) 393-7245; Website: endsexualexploitation.org

Visit Juvenile Detention Centers

The mission field inside the walls of America’s juvenile detention centers is ripe for the harvest. Many of these young people are desperate for Christian love and compassion. This is a pivotal time in their lives; if no one takes the time to show them how to make the right choices, statistics show that these children will likely be in and out of prison for the rest of their lives. Christians cannot abandon America’s youth. Start a group in your church that ministers at a juvenile facility in your community. Donate Bibles and Christian books to their libraries. Sow seeds that will transform.

Resource(s):

- Check your telephone directory for a juvenile correctional facility in your area.

Visit a Local Nursing Home

Love and attention are genuinely appreciated in nursing homes. The residents of these facilities are sometimes forced to enter these secluded facilities because they can no longer care for themselves. Many of these residents do not have family members who visit regularly, and some have no family at all, which results in crippling loneliness. More often than not, though, they wish to continue living as normal a life as possible. This is where you step in. Visit local nursing homes and get to know some of the residents there, maybe even adopt one. So many are lonely and greatly appreciate visits from others. Involve the children in your family or church, and teach a valuable lesson of respect for older generations. Share your faith and the hope that we have in Christ Jesus. Donate Bibles and Christian books for their libraries. Start a weekly Bible study for residents, or organize a regular “hymn singing.” A small effort goes a long way for these precious people.

Resource(s):

- Check your telephone directory for a list of local nursing homes and residential care

facilities.

Volunteer with Disaster Relief Efforts

Every so often we hear about devastating disasters like hurricanes, floods, fires, etc. Those are excellent opportunities for the church to be the hands, the heart and the hope of Christ to the hurting. There are so many ways we can help, whether by giving to groups doing hands on ministry, gathering and sending needed resources for distribution, or by actually going to the impacted communities to serve. Compassionate action gives the church credibility to speak the truth in love.

Resource(s):

- Salvation Army Disaster Relief – Website: disaster.salvationarmyusa.org
- Samaritan’s Purse – Phone: (828) 262-1980; Website: samaritanspurse.org
- Southern Baptist Disaster Relief – Website: namb.net/southern-baptist-disaster-relief

Volunteer with Hospice

Many of our fellow citizens spend their last days in hospices, making that the place where they will have their last opportunity to accept Christ and inherit the kingdom of Heaven. Christians need to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ to the sick and to the dying. Often, there is very little training required—just a willing heart and a Christ-like attitude. Remember, we are all God’s children, and we, as Christians, are called to minister to the sick.

Resource(s):

- The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization – Phone: (703) 837-1500; Website: nhpco.org; Check your directory for a hospice near you.

Volunteer for a Library’s Book Selection Committee

Public libraries often have a book selection committee that oversees the literature they purchase. If you are concerned about getting biblically-based and family friendly material in your public library system, find out if you can serve on this committee. When you find questionable books, bring them to the attention of library officials. Don’t be afraid to recommend books that are not currently available.

Volunteer at a Local Hospital

Historically, volunteers have been the backbone of America’s healthcare system. Today’s hospitals still rely on citizens volunteering their time. With the cost of healthcare skyrocketing, many hospitals are short-staffed and cannot give the time and attention to the sick and the dying who so desperately need a personal touch. This provides the perfect opportunity to show the love of Jesus in a practical way and to share your faith. Contact your local hospital and offer your services.

Resource(s):

- Check your local telephone directory.

Volunteer with Meals on Wheels

One of the simplest ways to help the elderly in your community is to take part in your local Meals on Wheels program. Sometimes delivering food through a program like this is the only way an aged person can continue to live in his or her home—and sometimes the delivery person is the only person they see all week. What an opportunity this program offers to do the Lord's work and share your faith!

Resource(s):

- Meals on Wheels America – Phone: (888) 998-6325; Website: mealsonwheelsamerica.org

Volunteer at a Pregnancy Support Center

If there is a pro-life pregnancy support or resource center in your area, volunteer your time and offer financial support. Many are in dire need of someone to answer the phone, take messages, type letters, file correspondence, stuff envelopes, or be a mentor to a young mother. Your efforts will make a positive pro-life statement in your community and impact the future.

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- Care Net – Website: care-net.org
- Heartbeat International – Phone: (888) 550-7577; Website: heartbeatinternational.org
- Option Line – Phone: (800) 712-HELP (4357); Website: optionline.org

To find local Pregnancy Support or Resource Centers, go to care-net.org/find-a-pregnancy-center

Volunteer for a Prison Ministry

One of Christ's most powerful teachings included the challenge to visit those in prison (Matthew 25:31-46). Today's prisons and jails are filled with men and women who either need to hear the Gospel or who desperately need Christian discipleship and fellowship. Many times, prisoners are so broken that they are eager to accept Christ into their hurting hearts. Fulfill Christ's command and visit your brothers or sisters in prison. Another way you can care for Christian brothers and sisters in prison is by donating inspirational soft-cover books and Bibles to prison libraries.

Resource(s):

- Prison Fellowship Ministries – Phone: (800) 251-7411; Website: prisonfellowship.org

Write Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor can provide a powerful forum for expressing your opinion on issues facing

your community. Your letter can make a difference. Be sure to refer to the specific article, issue, advertisement, etc. your letter addresses—and only address one issue in each letter. Your local paper usually publishes guidelines regarding letters to the editor. If not, call the paper and ask for them, and then take the time to write your letter, proofread it carefully, and send it in.

Include your name, address, and phone number. Most papers will not print anonymous letters. Be sure to keep your letter focused and brief. Keeping it under 300 words is a good goal.

Resource(s):

- Check the “Letters to the Editor” section of your local newspaper for guidelines and contact information.

X-Rated and Adult-Oriented Businesses Can Be Outmaneuvered

You can do more than complain about adult entertainment in your area—you can make a difference. If you are concerned about a sexually-oriented business in your area, contact your city or county zoning board. The “business” may not fit the zoning requirements of the property it sits on, due to bureaucratic oversight, and may have to close its doors. If current zoning permits the business, rally other concerned citizens in your community to change the zoning restrictions for your area.

Zander Raines, a CIT member at First Baptist Church in Lebanon, Tennessee approached his county legislative liaison about creating legislation regulating sexually-oriented businesses throughout the state of Tennessee. Raines and others then lobbied the state legislature to have this bill made into law. Dozens of state senators and representatives co-sponsored the bill. The State Attorney General put the bill on fast track and approved the legislation. Finally, the legislature passed it, and the governor signed the legislation into law. It is one of the strongest pieces of legislation of this type in the nation.

Resource(s):

- Citizens for Community Values – Phone: (513) 733-5775; Website: ccv.org

Yield Part of Your Vacation to Do Missions

As a Great Commission Christian, consider yielding some of your vacation time to do a mission project. Your church might organize a mission trip to a pioneer area where churches struggle comparative to those in the Bible Belt. Projects like Vacation Bible School, Backyard Bible Clubs, medical assistance, construction, etc., could be done in the course of a week with the satisfaction that you and your family made an impact for Christ. Remember, our founders came here for “the glory of God” and “the advancement of the Christian faith.” When you travel across the street, the state, or the country to do missions, you are following in their footsteps.

Resource(s):

- North American Mission Board (Short Term Mission Projects) – Website: namb.net
- Youth With a Mission – Website: ywam.org
- Impact Africa – Website: impactafrica.org

Zealously Fight Against Human Trafficking

Human trafficking continues to be a problem in our day and needs the voice and activism of the church. For example:

- “From 2007 to 2017, the National Human Trafficking Hotline, operated by Polaris, has received reports of 34,700 sex trafficking cases inside the United States.”
- “In 2017, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children estimated that 1 in 7 endangered runaways reported to them were likely sex trafficking victims.”
- “The International Labor Organization estimates that there are 4.8 million people trapped in forced sexual exploitation globally.” (Source: polarisproject.org)

Resource(s):

- Not For Sale Campaign – Website: notforsalecampaign.org
- National Center on Sexual Exploitation – Website: endsexualexploitation.org
- End Slavery Now – Website: endslaverynow.com
- YouthSpark – Website: youth-spark.org

Zealously Guard Your Religious Liberty

This nation was founded mostly by believers and based primarily upon principles found in the Bible. Only during the last 60 years has the Supreme Court ignored the clear wording of the First Amendment and overturned 150 years of precedent by declaring that there is a “wall of separation between church and state.” This court-created myth flies in the face of the words and actions of the vast majority of our Founding Fathers. As a result of the 1947 Supreme Court *Everson* decision and several Church-State cases that followed, organizations like the ACLU and now the Freedom From Religion Foundation have been stripping away the rights of Christians all across our nation. They are successful mainly because many Christians are ignorant of the rights they possess. Take time to read the original documents: The Declaration of Independence, The Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. Take time to rediscover some of the “Lost Episodes” from our spiritual heritage and learn the true meaning of Jefferson’s “wall,” which he intended as a protection of people of faith from government intrusion. Remember, if you do not use your freedom to defend your freedom, you may lose your freedom!

Resource(s):

- Family Research Council (FRC) – Phone: (800) 225-4008; Website: frc.org
- Family Research Council’s Watchmen Pastors – Website: WatchmenPastors.org
- Alliance Defending Freedom – Phone: (800) TELL ADF (835-5233) Website: adflegal.org
- American Center for Law and Justice – Phone: (757) 226-2489; Website: aclj.org
- Liberty Counsel – Phone: (407) 875-1776; Website: lc.org
- First Liberty Institute – Phone: (972) 941-4444; Website: firstliberty.org



Community Impact



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