

Dedicating our meetings

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Current practice

- Open council meetings with
- 1) Prayer to Christian God
- 2) Pledge of Allegiance

Separation of church and state

- Is prayer OK at a government meeting?
- What does our Constitution say?
- 1st Amendment: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion”
- Prayer is not excluded, must be OK

What about the pledge?

- “Pledge allegiance to the flag ... and to the republic”
- Loyalty to people better than loyalty to objects
- Group loyalty helps hold people together
- Need loyalty to self; integrity
- Need loyalty to group and individuals

Social context

- “One nation under God”
- Leaders invoke God while being ungodly
- Leadership sometimes based on greed, corruption, deceit, war
- An affront to my integrity
- One nation under \$

The common good

- Pledge says “with liberty and justice for all”
- A lofty goal
- Again, not true enough for me to espouse
- Not the current goal of our government
- Large crimes protected, small crimes prosecuted

Why a prayer & a pledge?

- Maybe we should merge
- Invocation + pledge → dedication
- Keep all 3?

Connect, resolve, plan

- We always need a good plan
- Understanding, analysis, insight → plan

First 3 meetings when I'm mayor

- 1) I write first dedication
- Absolute integrity; grounded aspirations
- Loyalty, truth, justice, compassion, ...
- 2) My friend/atheist/daughter is next
- 3) A Muslim
- Open inclusive government

Next 8 months

- Duty, honor allocated to the officiating councilor
- Dedication? Prayer & pledge? All 3?
- Who provides dedication?
- Councilor?
- Family member?
- Guest speaker?
- Councilor decides
- Again, open inclusive government

Enjoy beauty, keep dreaming :-)

