

“Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.” - the Lord Almighty (Jer. 29:7)

Paths of Justice

Justice & Elections

How can Jesus followers affect justice? This issue of “Paths of Justice” outlines some specific things that you can do to not only be just but to undo injustice.

May 8th is the time that citizens of the state of Ohio have the opportunity to choose candidates in the primary elections, who will face each other in the November election. While a significant number of people want the church to stay out of elections, I don’t think that God would agree. The founders of the United States created a different government structure. They had many bad ones as examples of what not to do. They started with the Constitution which is the contract between the government and the people, a concept whose roots go back to the covenant God made with His people at Mt. Sinai. The Constitution lays out how leaders are named, not by birth or by force but by the will of the people. We are the source of the power of the government. Not always obvious, is it? It is our job as citizens to choose the people who represent us to make the laws and regulations. It is documented that the founders were only able to create this system with much prayer because in the beginning, the sides were not at all in agreement.

Lots of good candidates run for offices in the primary elections that we never hear about in the Fall elections because they are not the choice of the party or they are underfunded and can’t get their message out. We

have the opportunity to vote for the candidates whose views about how to lead most closely align with God’s Word. If we don’t take this seriously and either don’t vote or just vote for the popular candidate, we could be putting people in office who despise all that God is.

A good place to start is to find a sample ballot for your county here: <https://tinyurl.com/y823g5yw>. How do we know who to vote for? The first thing that you can look at is the platform of the Republican and Democrat parties for the last election. Research has shown that Republican leaders vote with their party 89% of the time and Democrat leaders vote with theirs 74% of the time. You can find these platforms here: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/platforms.php>. As you read them, think about how the “planks” would be accomplished and the track record of the party.

The candidates advertise everywhere, but the parties and campaign literature do not go very deep into what they believe or their track record. All candidates are listed here: <https://uselections.com/oh/>

[oh.htm](#). Some groups attempt to vet the candidates. You can use these in addition to the candidates’ websites and campaign advertising. One reputable place is this website: <https://ivoterguide.com>. They sent a list of statements to every candidate and based upon their responses, a score is calculated.

The site provides the statements and responses for every candidate who replies to their survey so we can understand their beliefs. An example of a statement on the survey is: “Human life begins at conception and deserves legal protection at every stage until natural death.” The voting record of incumbents on selected issues of interest to Christians is here: <https://www.frcaction.org/scorecard>. For more information, see: <http://c3.thevoterguide.org/v/columbus18/build.do> and <http://www.vote411.org>.

We hope that you vote in the primaries and support candidates who seek to do God’s will in serving the nation. “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established” (Rom. 13:1). - Tom



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Definition of injustice:
Injustice occurs when someone with greater power deprives someone with lesser power of freedom, dignity, treasure, or livelihood.

“For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”

- Mordecai to Esther, who did speak up and saved her people (Esther 4:14)



Summer Support Groups

In our March newsletter, we laid out an opportunity to help people from our community who have been abused in their past. We will have a couple of 8-week support groups this summer using Christ-centered materials from Nicole Bromley, an abuse survivor who now leads a ministry to those who are vulnerable to sex trafficking, who are being trafficked, and who have survived it.

We are thankful to report that we now have some women from our church who have stepped up to lead a women's group! We also have someone to help lead a men's group, and we need another one or two men to assist as well. Please let us know if you would be willing to do this. It will be an excellent opportunity to serve and to grow through it.

Would you like to be part of this group? If you have gone through some type of abuse in your past and haven't worked through it before, or if you have done this to a degree but could still use more healing and assistance, we would love to have you be a part of this. Psalm 147:3 says that God heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds, and He is at work through His people right here in our church to share God's comforting presence and peace with you. Soon we will have a place to sign up online anonymously, which only the group leaders will have access to. We will make the dates available soon as well.

Another role that we could use help with is to have a man who could sit in the office or conference room while the groups meet. You could do your own work, and simply be present in case any sort of extra assistance is needed during these evening times when they meet. If there are several men who could help, we could set up a rotation.

Back in 2 Chronicles 28, there is an account of how the

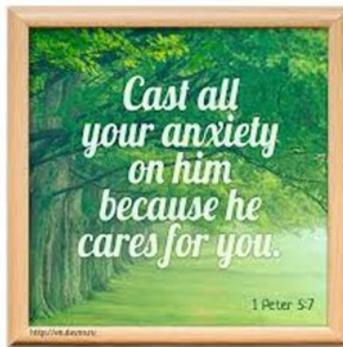
southern kingdom of Judah was experiencing judgment and the northern kingdom of Israel took captive 200,000 of their wives, sons and daughters, and took a great deal of plunder. For those who may be taking the Isaiah class right now, this happened during his time. Another prophet, however, confronted the Israelite army and told them that the Lord was angry with them for taking their fellow Israelites as prisoners, so they must send them back. Evidently, they were convicted, and provided these people from Judah with clothes and sandals, food and drink, and healing balm. They put those who were weak on donkeys and returned the people.

Can you imagine being through a war and being captured, but then being restored with the things you need? Those who have been abused have been through some very difficult experiences, perhaps traumatizing, and we have the opportunity to show Christ's love to provide them with what they need. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul talks about how the different members of the church have been given different gifts, such as those of healing, teaching, helping, and guidance. So how

else might we come together on their behalf?

It would be a blessing to provide a meal for the support groups when they come, perhaps arriving after being at work for the day, so they could enjoy a time of fellowship before continuing with their group discussion. It wouldn't have to be something elaborate, but if there are some people who would be willing to help put together some meals, please let us know. Or if anyone is in need of childcare in order to come, too, could you help with that?

We are looking forward to seeing how God works in these times to bring greater healing, freedom, and restoration.



Opportunities / Activities / Resources

- Prepare to be an informed voter in the primaries on May 8th as discussed in the first article.
- There are various opportunities described in the second article above – please let Tom or Doug know of any way you could help as soon as you are able so we can plan this out.
- On Monday, May 21, PDHC's 27th annual Golf for Life outing will be at Scioto Reserve Country Club in Powell. Golfers enjoy a leisurely day of golf, putting contest, auction, prizes, lunch and dinner and a brief presentation on how their support is making a real-life impact in the community. Let us know if you would like to go.
- Pray for FCC's ongoing investigative work and development of plans to serve victims of injustice.
- Do you want to get more involved with righting injustice? Come to our Justice Team meetings where prayer happens, plans are made, and investigations continue.
- Check with Tom Castor (tcbus7@att.net) or Doug Dunsmoor (dwdunsmoor@hotmail.com) for more information about these and more opportunities.