



## Church Connection November 2016

### *Strengthening, Preserving & Promoting Marriage, Family, Life & Liberty*

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*If the Son therefore shall  
make you free, ye shall  
be free indeed.*

John 8:36

*Righteousness exalteth  
a nation: but sin is a  
reproach to any people.*

Proverbs 14:34

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### **Thanksgiving**

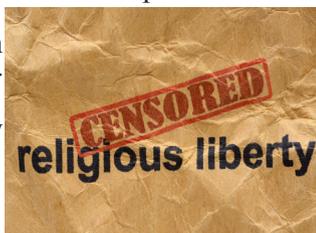
Why do you celebrate Thanksgiving? As President of the United States, George Washington proclaimed the first nationwide Thanksgiving celebration in America marking November 26, 1789, “as a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favours of Almighty God”. As you gather on November 24, take time to remember and then thank the Lord for the many ways He has blessed you.

### **A Titanic Clash of World Views**

Nearly 400 years ago a small band of Pilgrims and Puritans sailed across the Atlantic Ocean on The Mayflower. They left behind family, possessions, and their way of life. They knew little about their destination and faced an arduous and risky voyage.

Why did they make such a hazardous trip, making those kinds of sacrifices? The historical records tell us they came not for a better economy or better jobs but for something much more important. They came for religious freedom—for the right to live according to the dictates of their Christian faith and to raise their families within those beliefs.

One hundred fifty years later, the Founding Fathers fought a war for independence and then worked hard to establish a government that would respect our unalienable, God-given rights, such as religious freedom. In fact, our founders viewed religious freedom as the “first freedom” because they knew it was and is foundational to all our other freedoms.



The wording the Founders ultimately used in the First Amendment tells us what religious freedom is—it is the right not to give forced obeisance to or to live under the dictates of a state religion. The “Establishment Clause” prohibits Congress from making a law that establishes a religion. The second part of the Founders’ definition of religious freedom is what we call the “Free Exercise Clause” of the First Amendment: Congress shall make no law prohibiting the free exercise of religion.

Today, we face serious and ongoing attacks against our First Freedom. Non-discrimination laws arising out of so-called civil rights’ issues, largely based on people’s self-determined identities or their sexual preferences keep bumping into religious freedom. Christian bakers, photographers, florists and others are told their religious liberty must yield to those who demand they provide a service for their same-sex wed-

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## Pray...

- For Christians to value religious liberty for themselves and others and work to protect it.
- Regularly for your elected officials to know the Lord and to legislate in ways that are good.
- For your pastor to be “strong in the Lord.”
- That the Lord will provide for the needs of Wisconsin Family Council.

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## Consider this:

*There is the...mistake of those who talk as though personal evangelism and public justice are contradictory concerns, or at least that one is part of the mission of the church and the other is a sideline matter. If we are centered on the gospel, then that means that our mission is to expose sin with the light of Christ. Sin is not neatly marked out in silos marked “personal” and “social”.*

~Russell Moore

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*The denial of religious liberty for anyone is a subversion of religious liberty for everyone.*  
~R. Albert Mohler

dings. Students and their families are being told their faith-derived sense of modesty and privacy in restrooms, locker rooms, showers and even sleeping quarters must be ignored if even one student identifies with (whatever that means) his/her non-biological sex. Religious organizations must go to court to **not** pay for abortions or contraceptives as a part of their insurance programs, even though both directly conflict with their religious convictions.

In September the US Commission on Civil Rights released its report on religious freedom and non-discrimination. The chair of the commission, Martin Castro, wrote in the report, “*The phrases ‘religious liberty’ and ‘religious freedom’ will stand for nothing except hypocrisy so long as they remain code words for discrimination, intolerance, racism, sexism, homophobia, Islamophobia, Christian supremacy, or any form of intolerance.*”

This statement should alarm every American who understands and values religious freedom. We seem to have lost the middle ground that has historically characterized America—that area where we can find agreement even on issues we fundamentally disagree on.

In this particular conflict we are facing a titanic clash of world views. People of faith, especially Christians, seek to live out God’s clearly delineated truths, not just in the privacy of our homes or our churches, but all day, every day, everywhere. Those pushing non-discrimination laws and bringing legal challenges have a very different world view that says they themselves determine right and wrong and whatever they say about themselves is true and must be validated and protected by law. Given this world-view conflict, the clash of religious freedom and non-discrimination will not end anytime soon. Sexual liberty—not found in our US Constitution—is usurping religious liberty, which is guaranteed in the Constitution.

Every generation is responsible for safeguarding freedom. It is now our turn. We must ensure the lit torch of religious freedom we received from those ahead of us is successfully handed off to the next generation.

## About Wisconsin Family Council

*Wisconsin Family Council is a 501 (c)(3) organization that has been advancing Judeo-Christian principles and values in Wisconsin since 1986. We have largely done this by informing Wisconsin citizens, policymakers and churches about the important legislative and cultural issues so that they can be involved in strengthening and preserving marriage, family, life and liberty in our state.*

“Church Connection” is published monthly by WFC and is available to churches in Wisconsin.

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