



**Community Impact**

A TEAM PLAYBOOK & RESOURCE MANUAL

# **IMPACT**

...HAVING DONE ALL,  
STAND - EPH 6:13

HOW TO ESTABLISH A MINISTRY AT YOUR CHURCH

INFORM | IGNITE | IMPACT

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# **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 The Washington Stand, FRC's outlet for news and commentary from a 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**
- Social Media Posts**
- Announcement Slides**
- Small Group Studies**

# 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 [frcaction.org/contact-officials](http://frcaction.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](http://whitehouse.gov); E-mail: [whitehouse.gov/contact](mailto: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](http://house.gov) ; [senate.gov](http://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

## Correspondence Guidelines & Suggestions

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.

- Remember these four guidelines as you communicate with 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.

## Suggestions for In-Person Visits

- Sometimes the best way to lobby your elected official is with a personal visit.
  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.

## STAND FOR BIBLICAL VALUES

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](http://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.

We recommend that you do a Christian Citizenship Sunday at least once a year 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 Voter Resources tab at [FRCAction.org](http://FRCAction.org) for more information.

***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](http://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. Use the next resource to point out what God's word says about these key moral issues:

**Abortion**  
**Decency**  
**Education**  
**Poverty**

**Family**  
**LGBT & General Ideology**  
**Judicial Selection**

**Religious Liberty**  
**Security**  
**Environment**

## **STAND ON THE WORD OF GOD**

**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 AND GENDER IDEOLOGY:** God loves every person but opposes LGBT behavior. Additional reference resources on human sexuality available at [frc.org/worldview](http://frc.org/worldview). 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.

### **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](http://adflegal.org)).

# **MAKING A LASTING IMPACT**

## **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).



# Community Impact



FAMILY RESEARCH COUNCIL  
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