

February 2016

Pastor-Advisory Board

Rev. Bill Bates
Inspire Church, Sedro Wooley

Rev. Earl Bradley
Capital Region Ministries, Olympia

Rev. Randy Burtis
Luis Palau Crusades

Rev. Kevin Earls
Gateway Christian Fellowship, Shelton

Rev. Mike Fogaras
Gateway Christian Center, Olympia

Rev. Ted Hanson
Abundant Life Fellowship, Bellingham

Rev. Scott Manley
Flood The Sound, Olympia

Rev. Scott Montagne
Calvary Christian Assembly, Seattle

Rev. Jon Oletske
Stone Church, Yakima

Rev. Ken Parsley
Church on the Move, Yakima

Rev. Jim Ripley
Neighborhood Christian Cntr, Tumwater

Rev. Reuben Sapien
The Sanctuary Church, Lynnwood

Rev. Dan Secrist
Faith Assembly of Lacey

Rev. Tim Taylor
Watchman Ministries International

Rev. Dwain Wolfe
New Horizons Christian Center, Fife

Board of Directors

Paul Middleton
Chairman, Olympia

Jim Winterstein
Secretary/Treas., Olympia

Scott Blanton
Vancouver

Bob Higley
Olympia

Dorsey Holt
Shelton

Jere Irwin
Yakima

Michael Odell
Blaine

Dick Raport
Camano Island

Jim Robinson
Spokane

Fred Weiss
Bellevue

Rick Forcier
Executive Director

Staff

George Gauntlett
Data Administration

Beth Davis
Accounting

Julie Gallagher
Prayer Coordinator

Carl Walker
Prayer Coordinator

Rusty Howell
Field Director

Steve Matthews
Field Director

Clamoring for a (k)ing

Some religious leaders think America needs more “in-your-face” leadership

“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.”

--John Jay, (First) Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court

By all accounts, “The Donald,” the less-than-modest real estate developer and reality TV star, performed exceedingly well in this week’s “Super Tuesday” 11-state presidential preference primary contest. Now, even the hubris of Mr. Trump’s throw line “We’re winning everywhere,” is hard to dispute, especially as he continues to rack up curious endorsements from noteworthy religious figures, including Jerry Falwell, Jr., and Rev Robert Jeffress, et al.

That Trump is finding much low-hanging fruit among evangelicals, however, might be less about Trump and more a revelation of the current state of evangelicalism in post-modern America.

Last October, about 40 Pentecostal and Baptist leaders—including Paula White, Jentezen Franklin, Clarence McClendon, Jan Crouch, Kenneth Copeland, David Jeremiah, and megachurch leader Robert Jeffress—laid hands on The Donald on the 26th floor of Trump Tower in New York and asked God to give the candidate “wisdom, strength, and courage.”

Asked to explain the appeal of the Trump candidacy, one participant, Cleveland pastor Darrell Scott, replied, “We appreciate directness, we appreciate bluntness, we’re more in-your-face.”

Several weeks ago, Jeffress, lead pastor at 12,000 member First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, and FOX News contributor, admitted as much when he said:

“The fact is... any other year, Trump would be toast with evangelicals right now for some of the things he’s said... And while in a perfect world evangelicals would like a candidate who is a committed Christian and a competent leader, I think if they have to make a choice this time around, they’re going to leave *religion out of it* (emphasis ours) and go for the person they think is the competent leader, like Trump.”¹

But, far from an evangelical quorum, are such “in-your-face” endorsements at this point.

David Green is the founder and CEO of Hobby Lobby, widely known as a Christian-friendly business that was the prevailing party of a landmark Supreme Court decision surrounding religious freedom in 2014. Just two days ahead of the presidential preference primary last Tuesday in his home state of Oklahoma, Green made it a point to question Donald Trump’s qualifications for the presidency.

Comparing his own success with that of Trump, Green said, “Our family business that we began with \$600 has quite possibly been more successful than Mr. Trump’s, but that doesn’t make either of us qualified to be president. And unlike Mr. Trump, we give all the credit to God.”

Focusing on Trump's personality, Green continued, "Humility is what brings success. I don't see humility in Mr. Trump, and that scares me to death. I want a president that my kids, my grandkids and my great-grandkids can emulate."²

In an interview with *Christianity Today*, Max Lucado, pastor and best-selling author, also expresses concern about Trump—especially for his demeaning rhetoric. "... If he's going to call himself a Christian one day and call someone a bimbo the next...it's just beyond reason to me." Lucado continues:

"I don't know Mr. Trump. But I've been chagrined at his antics. He ridiculed a war hero. He made a mockery of a reporter's menstrual cycle. He made fun of a disabled reporter. He referred to the former first lady, Barbara Bush as "mommy," and belittled Jeb Bush for bringing her on the campaign trail. He routinely calls people "stupid," and "dummy." One writer catalogued sixty-four occasions that he called someone "loser." These were not off-line, backstage, overheard, not-to-be-repeated comments. They were publicly and intentionally...presented.

Such insensitivities wouldn't be acceptable even for a middle school student body election. But for the Oval Office? And to do so while brandishing a Bible and boasting of his Christian faith?

I have no inside track on the intricacies of a presidential campaign. I'm a pastor. I don't endorse candidates or place bumper stickers on my car. But I am protective of the Christian faith... Can we not expect a tone that would set a good example for our children? We stand against bullying in schools. Shouldn't we do the same in presidential politics?

...When it comes to language, Mr. Trump is in a league of his own. "It is out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks," Jesus said... We, as Christians, would do well to summon any Christian leader to a higher standard. This includes pastors (especially this one), teachers, coaches and, by all means, presidential candidates. All of them.

The...explanation for Mr. Trump's success is this: he has tapped into the anger of the American people. As one man said, "We are voting with our middle finger." Sounds more like a comment for a gang-fight than a presidential election. Anger-fueled reactions have caused trouble ever since Cain was angry at Abel..."³

Yes, Pastor Lucado, anger is in the air. A large portion of the voting public is disenchanted with a tepid Republican Congress—so much so—that even limited-government-leaning Christians are calling for a brash authoritarian leader to "take back our country."

Somewhat similar were the conditions in ancient Israel during the latter years of the prophet Samuel. While the nation had been reasonably secure during his godly reign as Israel's judge, the people were disgusted with Samuel's sons who were crooked and appeared to be heirs apparent. Eventually the people began clamoring for a "king" so they would be more like their neighboring nations.

While Samuel became quite upset, the Lord said to him, *Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them...*(1Sam 8:7).

But now comes the question we are asked almost daily: "Who will you vote for if the choice is narrowed to Hillary or Trump?" Depends. Is it preferable to be thoroughly mauled by a she lion or a he bear?

So how soon do we need to get back to you? 😊

Rick Forcier

¹. newshounds.us/fox_pastor_jeffress_wants_evangelicals_to_vote_for_trump_despite_his_ungodliness

². Hobby Lobby Founder Reveals Who He's Endorsing and Has a Little Something for Trump, Too, www.ijreview.com, 2/28/2016

³ maxlucado.com/decency-for-president/The Washington Post, 2/26/2016