



POLITICAL ACTIVITY POLICY

Approved December 15, 2020 by Church Council

The First Amendment of the United States Constitution guarantees fundamental protections of liberty with regard to religion. The United Methodist Church has long supported these protections, known as doctrine of separation of church and state, which allow the church to exert an ethical influence upon the state but prohibits the state from making laws “respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...” Further, the Internal Revenue Code prohibits churches and other 501(c)(3) organizations from “directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office.”

The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection (“Church”) encourages all citizens to actively participate in the political and civic process, and shall strictly adhere to all applicable federal statutes and regulations.

1. No Church member, leader or literature shall state or imply the Church’s endorsement, support, or opposition to any candidate or political party for elected or appointed office, nor should any candidate do the same.
2. Candidates for political office are welcome to attend and participate in worship and other Church functions, as any member of the public. Candidates must refrain from using any aspect of the Church’s ministry as a resource for campaigning, self-promotion or lobbying.
3. No attention will be drawn to a candidate during Church functions, unless all candidates for that office are invited and treated equally. However, common sense should prevail. For example, an elected official may be invited by the Church to participate as a civic leader without equal time being granted to a political opponent. Examples include: a mayor’s participation in a ribbon-cutting ceremony or a youth group hearing a message on leadership from a current legislator. When questions arise, the Church Council may be contacted for expedited approval.
4. When opposing candidates are invited to a Church function, every effort should be made for the candidates to appear at the same event. Under unusual circumstances, an invitation may be given for separate dates, but this practice is not recommended. The function must be for educational purposes only, and is not to be interpreted as endorsement, support, or opposition to any particular candidate or party. If a candidate should decline the invitation, that information must be noted publicly during the event with other candidates in attendance.
5. Any consideration of the Church’s official position on ballot measures will be reviewed by the Church Council.