

MVCF

October 2024 Newsletter

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Pastor's Pen

"But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbor?'" -Luke 10:29

Unless you have been hiding under a rock, you know that we are in an election season. And this election season is particularly messy and divisive. Our country seems to be divided and polarized far more than most election seasons. It is hard to have a conversation about politics without one or both people in the conversation getting mad at each other. And despite being so connected, we live in significant isolation from our neighbors, much preferring to surround ourselves with people and viewpoints we agree with than those that challenge us.

Jesus makes it clear in the parable of the Good Samaritan that our neighbor, the one we are called to love, is not the one who is similar to us, but the one who is different from us. Our neighbor in this election cycle is the one who votes differently from us. Sadly, not many Christians in the public eye are displaying this love of the other, as both liberal and conservative Christians take swipes at the other side and at each other.

In our church family, we have people who will vote for Donald Trump, and we have people who will vote for Kamala Harris. Given that reality, what does it look like for us as the body of Christ to love not only those who vote differently from us out in the world, but love those who vote differently from us in our own church family? Let me offer three principles that I believe will help us truly love one another. These are principles that I need to hear just as much as anyone else. They are not easy to implement given the divisive nature of our politics right now, but I do believe this is what we are called to as followers of Jesus.

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Worship Schedule

- 8:30 a.m. Sunday Adult Sunday School
- 9:30 a.m. Sunday Worship Service
- 10:00 a.m. Sunday Children's Bible Adventure

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1. Vote your conscience, not party. Christian author and blogger Trevin Wax recently wrote an article for the Gospel Coalition in which he notes how both Democrats and Republicans have shifted major policy positions in the last 30 years (<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/trevin-wax/borders-change-stay-settled/>). Go back 70 years, and the two parties look drastically different from how they do today. This shouldn't surprise us, as the only one who does not change is God and his Word (Hebrews 13:8, James 1:17, Psalm 119:89). People, institutions, and parties on the other hand can and do change with regularity. What this means for us as followers of Jesus is that we should look to the Word of God and not to political parties for Christian values as we vote. Even if you feel one party represents more Christian values than the other (which I would imagine most of us do!), no political party has a complete monopoly on God's will.

I once heard that the best way to take in the news is to have a newspaper (or a news app!) in one hand and a bible in the other. Maybe then the best way to vote is to have a sample ballot in one hand and a bible in the other. Then pray, work through each ballot issue, and vote your conscience. The benefit of voting this way as opposed to a straight party line vote is twofold: One, we include the Lord in our voting in a more active way. And two, it moves us away from an "us vs. them" mentality. We understand that some brothers and sisters in Christ voting their conscience may lead to them voting differently from us as different biblical values are weighing on their hearts. And that's OK. But those brothers and sisters are not the opposition, they are family members who simply voted differently from us.

2. Remember that this is an election, not a war. Politicians and political pundits portray their opponents not as Americans who have strong policy disagreements, but as enemies who threaten the very fabric of our country, if not our entire world. They do this to increase fear and motivate people to vote. And this is nothing new. Every four years we hear how our country will cease to exist if a certain person is voted into office. I think you have to go back at least 10-15 years to find a politician who did not engage in this kind of rhetoric.

The problem is that if we adopt such a mentality as followers of Jesus, then it will lead us to seeing brothers and sisters who vote differently from us not as brothers and sisters, but as the enemy. Political disagreements between brothers and sisters are made much worse when you view the other's position (and maybe the person themselves) as a threat to you. But if we can remember that elections are elections and not a battlefield, then it will be much easier to love the one who disagrees with us.

3. Make charitable judgments. This may be the most difficult principle of all, and as such, it is probably the most important. Since politicians portray their opponents as the enemy, we often hear (and think!) statements like "Donald Trump is a _____." "Kamala Harris is a _____." A word probably came to your mind for at least one of those blanks as you read those statements, and the word was probably not kind! And you may genuinely believe such statements are true. I would imagine that some political candidate has said or done something that is deeply offensive to you that led to those beliefs. My point is not to try to change your mind about such beliefs, but to make sure that we do not transfer such beliefs onto our brothers and sisters who vote differently from us. It is so easy to think (or say) "how could someone be a Christian and vote for _____?" But the moment we do so it becomes almost impossible to love that person.

It is helpful to remember that there was (and still is!) much about our character and heart that is offensive to God. But he loved us and sent his Son to die for us anyway (Romans 5:8). If that is the grace and mercy that God has lavished on us, then surely we can lavish a tiny fraction of that grace and mercy on one another. What might that look like in practice? A few thoughts...

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- Don't repeat what you hear on the news in conversation with someone who disagrees with you. The news media (liberal and conservative) is not kind, and so when you repeat something from the news you will probably reflect the same lack of kindness.
- Ask someone who disagrees with you how they came to hold that position. And if they explain their view, don't have an argument ready to persuade them, but thank them for sharing.
- Find out what biblical values are shaping how a person votes. You'll be surprised that many Christians who vote differently from you are voting based on solid biblical principles. They are probably not the same principles that are shaping how you vote, but that doesn't mean that they aren't biblical. The more we see that we are trying to honor God with how we vote, the less likely we will be to condemn or attack each other. And while such conversation will probably not change the way that we vote, it may at least open our eyes to important biblical values that we might not be thinking about.

I'm sure you can add to this list of suggestions, and if you have ideas for how we can engage in more gracious, loving dialogue with one another during this election season, I would love to hear it. And no matter how you vote, know that you are deeply loved.

Grace and Love,
Pastor Steve

OCTOBER CELEBRATIONS



Happy Birthday

Rebecca Schnarr	10/11
Autumn Quion	10/12
Russ Armstead	10/12
Jennifer French	10/14
Terri Carver	10/17
Susan Garcia	10/19
Luisa Johnson	10/20
Jenny Fiori	10/25

"The Lord will indeed
give what is good,
and our land will
yield its harvest."

Psalm 85:12



Youth Ministry

Small Groups:

Monday

1:00 p.m. Afternoon
Bible Study at MVCF

6:30 p.m. Women's
Bible Study at MVCF

Tuesday

9:30 a.m. Bible Study
at MVCF

6:30 p.m. Prayer
Meeting
Online

Wednesday

6:30 p.m. Youth Group
at MVCF

1st Thursday

5:30 p.m.
de Vos Home
Fellowship at MVCF

Church Work Party
Every Fourth

Saturday
of the month

8:30 a.m. to 11:00
a.m.

refreshment will be
provided.

For more contact
Frank Romeo

October brings Halloween and Harvest festivals all over the world. We are lucky to have been part of one of the best of all time. We set up various carnival type games, cakes walks, a hay-ride drive across the front lawn, etc. Our church has a big heart for our community. Each Wednesday night is like our Harvest Festival now. We have extended our Wednesday nights picnic on the lawn thru October because the kids want to come! We have about 20 neighborhood children under the age of 10 come on Wednesdays and enjoy several desserts including the most popular: smores. Thank you Carl Jensen & Scott Fiori for carrying on traditions! Thank you Jeni for cooking such delicious meals!

On the same Wednesday nights 7pm; we have started our Youth Group once again. We can happily report that we had 5 returning students: Briahna, Matt, Geneva, Lilly & Andrew! We just loved the idea of being together again in our 'cleaned' out Youth Group room with our easy mood lighting.

We started the study of the book of Daniel. It is good for them to relate as when Daniel was first chosen to help the king interpret his dreams -- he was only a teenager -- much like them! We got a full dose of Beth Moore with her intensity and passion for the Lord. We watched the video in our library because it is a set of DVD's. We will be alternating each week watching videos' and doing our homework in class. We already have had interesting conversations regarding Babylon then and now. How there are so many similarities and choices to make on a daily basis. Teenagers have such a unique perspective now and how social media can help them or can be cruel to them as well. Our youth group students are learning to equip themselves with the armor of God to fend off evil ones. The book of Daniel even emphasized it is better for them to eat vegetables and drink water to stay healthy instead of the eating rich 'fatty' foods like choice cut meats served with royal wines and desserts. The king wanted to train Daniel and his friends to learn the Babylon culture, but Daniel did not want to obey or honor any of their gods on his one true God the Father Almighty, Our Lord.

Also, on October 5th we'll be attending the Celebration of Life for our dearly beloved: Chris French!

Chris, Chris -- we sure will miss--- you!

We loved you beyond words as you kissed or created every church event we have!

We are guessing that our church will be overflowing with many many peeps!

October 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 9:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Zoom Prayer Meeting	2 10am-1:00pm SM Food Pantry 6:00pm Picnic on the	3	4	5 Chris French Celebration of Life
6 8:30am Adult Sunday School 9:30am Worship Service	7 7:00pm Women's Bible Study	8 9:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Zoom Prayer Meeting	9 10am-1:00pm SM Food Pantry 6:00pm Picnic on the Lawn	10	11	12
13 8:30am Adult Sunday School 9:30am Worship Service	14 1:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Women's Bible Study	15 9:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Zoom Prayer Meeting	16 10am-1:00pm SM Food Pantry 6:00pm Picnic on the Lawn	17	18	19
20 8:30am Adult Sunday School 9:30am Worship Service	21 1:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Women's Bible Study	22 9:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Zoom Prayer Meeting	23 10am-1:00pm SM Food Pantry 6:00pm Picnic on the Lawn	24	25	26
27 8:30am Adult Sunday School 9:30am Worship Service	28 1:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Women's Bible Study	29 9:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Zoom Prayer Meeting	30 10am-1:00pm SM Food Pantry 6:00pm Picnic on the Lawn	31		

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Jeremiah 29:11

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Col. 3:12

Mission Village Christian Fellowship

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San Diego, CA 92123

Phone: 858-278-2633

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We're on the web!

missionvillage.church

Council Members

Pastor	Steve de Vos
Moderator	Ronda Adams
Clerk	Joanna de Vos
Financial Secretary	Tony DaVee
Treasurer	June McCollough
Children's Ministry	Open
Youth Ministry	Terri Carver
Adult Ministry	Open
Stewardship	Frank Romeo
Fellowship	Jenny Fiori
Service	Carl Demas
Missions / Evangelism	Matt & Ellen Davis
Finance Ministry	Ernie Garcia
Worship	Hannah French

Sunday Schedule

Worship & Children's Sunday School.....9:30 a.m.

Nursery & Toddler Care is Available During Worship Service

Service will be live on YouTube or Facebook

Elders

Pastor /Elder.....Steve de Vos
Administrative ElderTony DaVee
Elder..... Carl Jensen

Staff

Administrative Assistant.....Judy Yacob
Nursery Attendant.....Hannah French