

Dear C3 Family,

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. These past few months of transition have been rewarding and challenging, and yet even in the midst of the valleys and mountaintops we have faced together, God's grace and mercy has been evident in so many ways.

As followers of Christ, we are called to seek God's kingdom above all else and to love and serve one another. Our primary purpose in coming together is to worship and honor our Heavenly Father, to grow in our faith, and to support and encourage one another in our walk with Jesus.

As the Centralia Community Church pastors and leadership, it is our desire to hear from God and obey. The Hebrew word for this is 'Shema'. In the simplest terms, Shema means "to hear and obey." So, to hear God is to obey God—and to obey God is to hear God. C3's leadership has been listening and discerning the voice of God to address how we conduct our worship and the focus of our hearts as we gather together as a community of believers.

Scripture provides us clear paths to hearing from God and how we are to walk with God and with each other. While we live in a world that is often immersed in political debates and discussions, I want to emphasize that our time of worship is to focus on God and the teachings of Jesus Christ, which guide us in love, compassion, and righteousness.

Political matters such as initiatives, bills, and elections can be divisive and often distract us from the true purpose and direction of our worship. Our unity as a church is rooted in our shared faith, not in our political affiliations or opinions. Therefore, it is essential that we maintain an atmosphere of respect and love within our congregation, regardless of our diverse political perspectives.

Jesus spoke to the totality of the human experience. He did not shy away from issues such as poverty, race, sexuality, and family to name a few. As Jesus addressed those things, so will we. Jesus is not married to any political party or agenda. Our faith in Jesus must guide our values and message, which will leave us at odds from time to time with methods and messaging of any political party. The words of Jesus without the works of Jesus is not the way of Jesus.

While it is important to be aware of current events and to engage in responsible citizenship, let us remember that our ultimate allegiance is to our Heavenly Father and His Kingdom. Our commitment to living out the teachings of Jesus should guide our actions and decisions in the public sphere. We are to be a light in the world because we are plugged into the hope for the world, Jesus.

I encourage each of you to find appropriate avenues outside of our worship services to express your political views and engage in political discussions. Let us engage in respectful dialogue with others, seek common ground, and work towards Christ-like transformation in our communities. We urge you to help us to keep our worship services sacred and focused on our spiritual growth, as we worship God with one heart and mind.

May we continue to demonstrate the love of Christ to all people, regardless of their political beliefs, and may our worship be a source of unity and inspiration for all who enter our doors. Philippians 2:13 says, “for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.”

Prayerfully and Respectfully,  
Pastoral Staff and Elders