

The Strategic Prayer Initiative – **Pink Sheet Expander Legal Concerns**

Where Prayer Focuses Power Falls!

- ❑ 1. Pray that Christian students will continue to be allowed to exercise their freedom of religion and speech. In a Michigan school district, songs considered too “Christian-based” were initially barred from the elementary school talent show. Two students at an elementary school were told there was an issue with the faith-based songs they chose for an upcoming talent show. After First Liberty sent a letter to school officials, the school changed its decision in a matter of hours, allowing the students to perform their religious songs. (Source: www.firstliberty.org)
- ❑ 2. Pray for a favorable outcome for Heather Rooks, a member of the Peoria Unified School Board in Arizona, who is prohibited from referencing Scripture during school board meetings. First Liberty sued on her behalf. First Liberty attorney, Andy Gould said, “...If it is okay for U.S. Presidents to quote the Bible, why can’t a Peoria school board member?” (Source: www.firstliberty.org)
- ❑ 3. Pray for Pastor Howard Kaloogian of Grace New England in Weare, New Hampshire. The church meets in a barn on Pastor Howard’s property, with usually no more than 30 people. Town officials ordered the church gatherings to stop, despite repeatedly allowing other secular meetings there. First Liberty has filed a federal lawsuit on behalf of the church. (Source: www.firstliberty.org)
- ❑ 4. Praise God for a favorable outcome for two New Jersey churches that were excluded from a public grant program intended to preserve historic landmarks. In the past, churches and religious organizations were eligible for and received funding from the program. However, in 2018, the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled that the state constitution prohibits using taxpayer dollars to restore historic church buildings. First Liberty sued in federal court and asked a judge to allow the churches to participate in the program. The court granted our request for a preliminary injunction and made clear that houses of worship cannot be excluded from generally available public benefits—such as historic preservation grants. The ruling allows Morris County to once again include churches in its Historic Preservation Trust Fund, as it had done for many years. (Source: www.firstliberty.org)
- ❑ 5. Pray for a favorable outcome in the Supreme Court Case First Choice Women’s Resource Centers v. Platkin. Alliance Defending Freedom attorneys representing a faith-based, pro-life, medically licensed pregnancy center filed a petition with the Supreme Court asking it to grant review of the case and hold that civil rights plaintiffs do not need to litigate first in state court but may bring federal claims—the same as any other person suffering constitutional injury at the hands of a state official. ADF says First Choice Women’s Resource Centers was targeted by the state because of its views by demanding that it identify—by name—the donors behind nearly 5,000 donations and produce up to 10 years of its internal, confidential documents. First Choice responded to the subpoena and produced some 2,300 pages of documents, but it also filed a suit in federal court to stop Platkin’s attempt to obtain further documents. Platkin responded by filing his own lawsuit against the pregnancy center in state court. Because of Platkin’s state-court filing, the lower federal courts said First Choice must pursue its federal claims in state court. Pray the Supreme Court grants the pregnancy center’s petition to be heard in federal court like any other civil rights case. (Source: www.adflegal.org)
- ❑ 6. Pray for a favorable outcome for Cambridge Christian School, which was told by the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) that it could not pray over the loudspeaker before kickoff of its state championship football game. Their opponent was University Christian School. The two faith-based schools faced off at the Citrus Bowl, now known as Orlando’s Camping World Stadium. Officials argued that prayer was an “endorsement” of religion since it would be taking place on government property. Their actions are illegal and unconstitutional—which is why we are fighting in the federal appeals court to bring justice to our clients. In a twist of irony, two other Christian schools played a championship game at this stadium in 2012 and were allowed to pray through the loudspeakers. Pray that the Supreme Court takes the case because it would be an opportunity to bring closure and have their rights restored. To correct the wrongs done when the state banned Cambridge Christian from praying over the loudspeaker at a football game against another Christian school. With their case also comes an opportunity to set a major precedent. Winning at the Supreme Court could take what First Liberty considers to be “really bad precedents” off the books. The result could protect the rights of students and religious schools across the country for decades to come. (Source: www.firstliberty.org)
- ❑ 7. Christian Lawyers and Judges: Pray that God would raise up lawyers and judges who “Vindicate the weak and fatherless; Do justice to the afflicted and destitute, Rescue the weak and needy; Deliver them out of the hand of the wicked.” (Psalm 82:3-4 NASB)
- ❑ 8. Pray that the state will not attempt to define what counts as religious expression, like Wisconsin tried to. Praise God for the unanimous ruling by the US Supreme Court that reversed Wisconsin’s Supreme Court decision that upheld the denial of exemption from unemployment tax for Catholic Charities Bureau (CCB). Wisconsin argued that the services CCB offered were secular in nature (CCB’s mission to serve and aid the poor and disadvantaged), serving people of all faiths without explicit evangelism efforts. In other words, the state was defining what counted as religious expression and what doesn’t. (Source: www.christianlegalsociety.org)
- ❑ 9. Praise God for a favorable outcome in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. They ruled Tuesday in World Vision, Inc. v. McMahon that the ministerial exception doctrine protects the right of religious organizations to hire people who share an organization’s religious beliefs when the employee performs “vital religious duties” to carry out the “core mission” of the organization. (Source: www.firstliberty.org)
- ❑ 10. Pray this Fall’s Supreme Court cases that could set precedent for Christians. Pray that outcomes enable Christians to “lead tranquil and quiet lives in all godliness and dignity.

- ❑ 11. Praise God that the City of Waco pivoted and now allows people to share their faith freely in public areas. Pastor Holmes, compelled by his Christian beliefs to share his faith with attendees at the Brazos festival hosted by the Waco Pride Network, held in Brazos Park East, a public park owned and maintained by the City of Waco, Texas. He was joined by four other members from his local church. During the event, the entire park remained free and open to the public. Everyone was free to walk in and enjoy the park just as they could at any other time of the year. At least three police officers from the Waco Police Department, one of whom was Officer Chris Sharpless, approached and halted their speech. Officer Sharpless informed Pastor Holmes that WPN's permit allowed them to remove "unwanted activity" to a restricted zone in the park. In response, First Liberty Institute sent a letter to the City of Waco demanding that officials ensure free speech remains protected and honored in public parks. The City then dropped its speech zone policy and announced that it will allow Pastor Ronnie Holmes and fellow church members to freely engage in religious dialogue with local attendees at Brazos East Park. Pray that all people will continue to be allowed to share their faith freely in public arenas. (Source: www.firstliberty.org)

- ❑ 12. Judicial Branch (U. S. Supreme Court and Federal Courts): Pray that God would help each judge to make decisions that would be in keeping with the purity and character of the living Judeo/Christian God. Pray that the Lord would bring future justices of His choice onto the Court in His sovereign timing. Ask God to draw each justice to Himself. Pray that the Supreme Court's decisions would line up with the word and will of God and that they would decide justly regardless of cost or consequence.

- ❑ 13. Pray that Churches can help people in the community without municipal government interference. Praise God that the Rock, a church in Castle Rock, Colorado was victorious against the town that tried to stop them from offering shelter suddenly homeless in 2 RVs on their property. No place offers emergency, temporary shelter in either the town or the county. The church's ministries also include food distribution, job training, financial assistance, and a variety of church-led efforts to move the displaced from a place of homelessness to a permanent solution that includes their own residence, a job, and a steady income. In June, the court granted a preliminary injunction on behalf of The Rock. Then, in June 2025, attorneys announced a settlement agreement with the Town of Castle Rock that will recognize the church's ability to continue to operate its on-site temporary shelter ministry, use its building to provide emergency shelter (including partnering with the Red Cross. Further, the Town of Castle Rock agreed to pay \$225,000 toward the church's attorney's fees. (Source: www.firstliberty.org)

- ❑ 14. Pray for a favorable outcome for free speech in the case of WallBuilders v. WMATA. The First Amendment requires that government agencies treat speech equally regardless of the viewpoint of the speaker. WallBuilders Presentations is an organization dedicated to presenting America's forgotten history and heroes, with an emphasis on the moral, religious, and constitutional foundation on which America was built – a foundation which, in recent years, has been seriously attacked and undermined. Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) rejected advertisements submitted by WallBuilders suggesting their ads contained issues on which the public held "varying opinions." First Liberty, joined by the ACLU and the law firm Steptoe, filed a lawsuit against WMATA. (Source: www.firstliberty.org)

- ❑ 15. Pray that the constitutional right to engage in religious exercise within one's own home remains free from government burden and interference. Rabbi Illulian hosted gatherings for family members and friends (not the public) that included Shabbat prayers, dinner, and religious holiday celebrations. The city of Beverly Hills, after receiving complaints from a private citizen, invasively investigated (including drone surveillance) Rabbi Illulian's gatherings and issued a "Notice of Violation" prohibiting all religious activity at the home with non-residents. Praise the Lord that after receiving 2 letters from a law firm and First Liberty, the city withdrew its notices. Pray that everyone will continue to be allowed to exercise their right to exercise their religion within their own home. (Source: www.firstliberty.org)

- ❑ 16. Involvement: Ask God to direct you and other believers to legal issues that concern Christians.

- ❑ 17. Pray that our nation would value life and that the murder of the unborn, disabled, or elderly would not be tolerated or funded by our government. In June 2022, the Supreme Court overturned its 1973 Roe v. Wade decision. Now that each state must decide the question of the abortion issue, pray that unborn life would be preserved as states work out the details of their own statutes. (Source: www.adflegal.org)

- ❑ 18. Pray that Christian universities will have equal opportunities to work with local school districts as secular universities. An Arizona public school board canceled a university's student-teaching contract, citing only the university's Christian beliefs. Praise the Lord the school district reinstated the contract with the university after ADF filed a lawsuit on the Christian university's behalf. Pray that no Christian University or entity will be treated differently because of their religious views. (Source: adflegal.org)

- ❑ 19. Rights of Public-School Students: Pray that students and parents know and exercise their rights to opt out of activities that violate religious beliefs; to bring a bible to school; to form bible clubs; and choose religious topics. (Source: www.christianlaw.org)

- ❑ 20. Pray for this Fall's Supreme Court cases that could set precedent for Christians. Pray that outcomes enable Christians to "lead tranquil and quiet lives in all godliness and dignity."

- ❑ 21. Executive Branch (President): Pray, petition and give thanks for "...all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity." (1Timothy 2:2). Pray that the Executive Branch would create policies that would allow Christians to live in peace and share their faith freely and that would be compassionate while protecting our nation. (Psalm 82:3-4 NASB)
- ❑ 22. Legal Organizations: Pray for Christian legal agencies (Alliance Defending Freedom, ACLJ, Christian Legal Society, Center for Religious Expression, First Liberty, and a host of others) that provide legal advocacy for issues surrounding freedom of speech and religion around the world. Pray that leaders nurture their walks with God and that they are open to the leading of the Spirit of God, not political ideology or expediency. Pray for wisdom as they choose, advocate, and litigate cases, and for effectiveness in their work.
- ❑ 23. Legislative Branch (Congress): Pray that "Congress...make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." Pray that no law be passed that would infringe on freedom of religion or speech for any citizen and that the free sharing of the Gospel will always remain legal. Pray that all life would be protected by our nation's laws. Pray for your U.S. Senators and Congressperson to be led by God in their legislative decisions." (Source: First Amendment U.S. Constitution)
- ❑ 24. Frequent Legal Opponents: Many organizations (Freedom From Religion Foundation, American Civil Liberties Union, American Humanists Association, American Atheists, Military Religious Freedom Foundation and others) target Christian schools, ministries, churches, and individuals in court and in legislative initiatives with the purpose of silencing or punishing believers for behaving in accordance with their religious beliefs. Pray that believers would fight with spiritual weapons and seek and obey God as they combat these onslaughts. Pray that the leadership of many of these opposing organizations would come to know the love of Christ, the forgiveness of sins, and the transformation of their lives. Pray that believers show love towards these people. Luke 6:27-28 "But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. (Source: www.cpcfoundation.com)
- ❑ 25. States' Lawmakers: Pray for governors and state legislators to create no law that hinders the freedom of speech or religions for its citizens. Pray for your governor and state legislators to be led by God as they create bills, laws, and policies.
- ❑ 26. Pray that prayer is not silenced in the public arena. Tarin Swain, during the public comment section of a city council meeting in Ventura, California, Tarin Swain used her allocated 60 seconds to pray. As she began to pray, the crowd booed and hissed at her, and she was immediately told by the mayor to "Stop, we don't do prayer!" In response to this direct violation of the First Amendment, First Liberty sent a demand letter. In their response to our letter, the City of Ventura made it clear that they do not have a policy banning prayer during public comments, despite what the mayor said and did. They invited Tarin to come back to the next city council meeting regarding the CARE Policy and ensured her that she would be welcome to present her prayer and comments. (Source: www.firstliberty.org)
- ❑ 27. Pray that Christian students will continue to be able to exercise free speech in all forms. A New York High School rejected the designs for her paid parking spot that Sabrina Steffens submitted because they included a bible verse. The school guidelines only say students cannot include "offensive language, pictures or symbols, negative or rude language, and 'gang-style' tagging." There's nothing that says students cannot express their faith. After sending a demand letter to the school, First Liberty is "pleased that the school district changed course and will allow Sabrina to truly express her deeply held beliefs in her design," said Keisha Russell, Senior Counsel for First Liberty Institute. "The First Amendment protects students' private expressions of faith in public schools." Praise God for this favorable outcome. (Source: www.firstliberty.org)
- ❑ 28. Municipal Governments: Pray that local ordinances would not hinder the rights and activities of individual Christians or Bible-believing Churches and that the free spread of the Gospel is not hampered.
- ❑ 29. Pray that the 1st Amendment of the U.S. Constitution would strongly protect all religious rights in the United States.
- ❑ 30. Pray that religious expression is not suppressed on college campuses. After visiting the campus of Georgia State University, Stephen Atkerson was invited by a student to sit near the dining area to discuss his views on Christianity. After the conversation began, the student engagement coordinator and three armed police officers forced him to end the conversation and return to the "free speech" area. First Liberty sent a demand letter to the Georgia State University President demanding written assurance that Stephen Atkerson will not be prohibited from approaching or talking to students about their faith. In the letter, attorney Nate Kellum asserts that "Religious speech is constitutionally protected and conversational speech is also safeguarded. Oral dissemination of religious views falls under the Free Speech clause." After sending the demand letter, GSU acknowledged Mr. Atkerson's First Amendment right to speak with students on campus about his faith when invited to engage in conversation. (Source: www.firstliberty.org)