

American Council of Christian Churches  
83<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convention, October 22-24, 2024  
Hope Evangelical Methodist Church, Youngstown, PA  
Resolution on Religious Liberty

The First Amendment to the United States Constitution begins: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” Positioning this statement at the very beginning of the Bill of Rights, the Founding Fathers clearly communicated their commitment to neither endorsing nor regulating religious practices within the United States.

In spite of the plain language of the United States Constitution, Christians should not take religious liberty for granted. In 1 Timothy 2:2, the Apostle Paul exhorts the church to pray “that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.” This prayer reflects the church’s desire to be left alone by secular authorities, so that its members can freely please their God and minister to other people as God directs them. Such a prayer reflects both the spirit of the First Amendment and the desire of God for His people.

The First Amendment protects the right of Americans to serve God without restraint as their consciences dictate in every aspect of their lives—their thoughts, words, and actions. In spite of this constitutional protection, so-called “progressives” seek to limit religious liberty when Christian beliefs oppose the modern-day trinity of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Religious liberty is being stifled in many segments of American society. “Progressives” apply their unconstitutional dogma to healthcare by mandating that Christians pay, through their healthcare plans, for immoral procedures, pills, and treatments. In certain areas, stable couples are unable to participate in foster care or adoption programs due to their Christian beliefs. Educational institutions, supported by public funds, have been known to require on-campus Christian clubs to admit non-Christians into their membership and leadership. Christian businesspeople have been pressured, through lawsuits, to support activities that are contrary to their religious convictions. Tax-funded spaces, such as public schools, have been marked off-limits for use by Christians, while others have access to them. Christian chaplains, especially in the military, are being muzzled and passed over for promotion simply for holding to the tenets of their sponsoring bodies. Liberal governments force ministries to hire people who do not hold to their beliefs by determining that certain positions within those ministries are not ministry related.

Therefore, based upon these and other egregious violations of religious liberty, the American Council of Christian Churches at its 83<sup>rd</sup> annual convention, October 22-24, 2024, at Hope Evangelical Methodist Church of Youngstown, PA resolves, first of all, to thank God for our God-given religious liberties acknowledged in the United States Constitution. Furthermore, we call upon American Christians to pray that their present government would faithfully follow its founding principles. We plead with biblically faithful ministries to be “wise as serpents and harmless as doves”<sup>1</sup> by not compromising scriptural principle for government funding, which too often leads to government control; instead, we adjure them to rely on the provisions of the God who owns “every beast of the forest . . . and the cattle upon a thousand hills”<sup>2</sup> and who promises to “supply all [our] need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”<sup>3</sup> Lastly, we encourage Christians to vote for candidates who champion religious liberty and to run for political office as advocates for religious liberty, understanding that genuine faith can never be coerced or legislated.



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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 10:16

<sup>2</sup> Psalm 50:10

<sup>3</sup> Philippians 4:19