



# What the IRS Ruling on Church Endorsements Really Means



## Q&A FOR PASTORS AND CHURCHES

### 1 Can I actually speak about candidates from the pulpit?

---

**Yes.** If you've ever wondered that, you're not alone. For decades, many pastors have been led to believe that mentioning political issues, elections, candidates, or public policy from the pulpit could cost their church its tax-exempt status.

But that fear—based on **a misunderstanding of the Johnson Amendment**—was always unfounded. And now, the IRS has finally said so out loud.

### 2 What exactly did the IRS say?

---

In a legal filing on July 7, 2025, the IRS acknowledged that churches and houses of worship may endorse political candidates to their own congregations without violating the Johnson Amendment.

They described these endorsements as **“a family discussion concerning candidates.”** In other words, when a pastor speaks to his flock during worship or regular church communication, it's not considered political campaigning—it's protected internal religious speech.

### 3 Is the Johnson Amendment gone?

---

Not entirely. The Johnson Amendment still technically exists—but the IRS has clarified that it does not apply to churches communicating with their own congregation through normal religious channels. That's a game-changer.

You still can't turn your church into a campaign headquarters or run paid political ads—but you can speak truthfully and directly to your people about issues, candidates, and elections from a biblical perspective.

### 4 Wasn't this always the case?

---

**Yes—and no.**

The IRS had long treated church endorsements to their own members as “low risk” and virtually never enforced the Johnson Amendment against churches. But most pastors didn't know that. And the law was vague enough to make many feel silenced.

The July 2025 ruling makes the IRS's unofficial stance official, finally removing the legal gray area and affirming your right to speak clearly from the pulpit.

### 5 What's the difference between “internal” and “external” communication?

---

Think of it this way:

#### **Protected Communication**

- Sermons during worship
- Church newsletters or bulletins sent to members
- Church emails, texts, or websites directed at your congregation
- Statements made in your normal pastoral voice

#### **Still Restricted**

- Paid ads on TV, radio, or online endorsing a candidate
- Public campaign rallies hosted by your church for candidates
- Using church resources to promote candidates to the general public

**The key is this: you're free to disciple your people in truth—including how that truth may shape their political choices.**



# What the IRS Ruling on Church Endorsements Really Means



## Q&A FOR PASTORS AND CHURCHES

### 6 But isn't there still a risk?

---

As long as your endorsement is:

- Directed at your congregation,
- Communicated in the course of normal religious ministry, and
- Framed in a biblical context,

**There is no legal risk.**

That's straight from the IRS's own filing. Churches now have the green light to speak biblically and boldly about elections and candidates to their own members.

### 7 So what should I do now as a pastor?

---

**Here's what we recommend:**

- **Pray** and seek clarity from God's Word on issues and candidates.
- **Disciple** your people year-round—not just during election season—on biblical truth about life, marriage, family, and justice.
- **Speak** clearly when political candidates are aligned (or not) with biblical values.
- **Educate** your church on what this ruling means—and remove fear from their minds.
- **Partner** with trusted organizations like The Family Foundation in Kentucky or its allied family policy council in your state to stay informed and equipped.

The pulpit is not a political platform—but it is a place where truth must be proclaimed.

Don't let confusion or fear keep you from shepherding your people in all areas of life. Clarity is not political—it's pastoral.

Find your state's family policy council:  
[familypolicyalliance.com/allies](http://familypolicyalliance.com/allies)

### 8 How can The Family Foundation help me as a pastor?

---

We know that the pulpit is a sacred trust—and our allies are here to serve you. The Family Foundation exists to equip, connect, and encourage you as you lead your people and engage the culture with biblical truth.

**The Family Foundation can help:**

- **Equip** you with biblical clarity on cultural and moral issues—like **life, marriage, family, and religious liberty**—so you can speak with confidence from a Christ-centered, gospel-driven foundation.
- **Provide resources and tools** for your church to engage wisely—sermons, small group content, *Let Us Pray* devotionals, voter guides, Q&A documents, and more—so your people are not just voting, but thinking biblically.
- **Bridge the gap between Church and State** through the Church Ambassador Network, helping you: 1) Pray faithfully for those in authority, 2) Partner with civic leaders on community needs, and 3) speak wisely into public policy with a biblical worldview.
- **Be a trusted friend and ally** in your calling to be salt and light—not just in your church, but in your city, your district, and the wider culture.

The Family Foundation and our allies would love to walk with you—prayerfully, practically, and pastorally. **Let us serve you, so you can serve your people—and help bring God's wisdom back into public life, where it belongs.**

*This resource was originally created by Florida Family Voice ([flfamily.org](http://flfamily.org)).*