



Pastors Guide on New IRS Ruling

QUESTION 01

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.

QUESTION 02

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 stated this clearly.

QUESTION 03

Was this always the case?

Yes—and no. The IRS rarely enforced the Johnson Amendment against churches, historically treating pastoral endorsements to church members as “low risk.” Still, many pastors remained unaware of this lack of enforcement and felt silenced by the law's ambiguity. The July 2025 ruling clarifies the IRS's unofficial stance, eliminating the legal gray area and affirming the right to speak freely from the pulpit.

QUESTION 04

But is it 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 clear green light to speak biblically and boldly about elections and candidates to their own members.



Q & A for Pastors on IRS Ruling

QUESTION 05

So is the Johnson Amendment gone?

The Johnson Amendment technically remains in effect, but the IRS has clarified its scope: it does not apply to churches communicating with their congregations through established religious channels. This significantly alters the landscape. While churches cannot function as campaign headquarters or run paid political advertisements, they are permitted to speak candidly and directly to their members about issues, candidates, and elections from a biblical viewpoint.

QUESTION 06

What does this look like in practice? What CAN I say?

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.

QUESTION 07

As a pastor, what should I do now?

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 Delaware Family Policy Council to stay informed and equipped.



Q & A for Pastors on IRS Ruling

07

As a pastor, what should I do now? pt. 2

The pulpit is a place to proclaim truth. Do not allow confusion or fear to prevent you from guiding your congregation in every aspect of life. Providing clarity isn't a political act, it's a pastoral duty.

QUESTION 08

How can Delaware Family Policy Council help me as a pastor?

Our mission is to inform pastors, churches, and anyone who wants to stay informed about the policies presented in Dover that directly attack God's design for human flourishing. We come alongside pastors so that they can feel equipped to shepherd their people well through these attacks.

- We provide resources to equip you as you shepherd your congregation well. Take a look at [this podcast](#) hosted by our national partners that outlines practical ways to shepherd well in this cultural moment.
- We help you to engage government as a mission field through the [Church Ambassador Network](#). The C.A.N. provides monthly guides to help you pray faithfully for those in authority, and connects pastors with elected officials for discipleship and partnership on community needs, so you can be salt and light in your city, your district, and the wider culture.
- Invite the DFPC Team to host our "[Faith and the Ballot](#)" series at your church. This series is meant to equip the church on how to engage specifically with current Delaware cultural issues from a biblical worldview. Contact us at 302-298-8698 to bring it to your congregation!
- Be our guest at our monthly lunch briefings, held in each county, where you can be equipped with resources to bring back to your church leadership. Contact 302-298-8698 to learn more and RSVP.