

February, 23, 2018

Last November the City of DePere, Wisconsin, where our radio station is located, passed a “non-discrimination” ordinance effective March 1, 2018. The ordinance was passed to address the concerns of self-identified transgender people regarding housing, employment and services they could access in the City of DePere.

During the public hearings several Christian leaders expressed our concerns over the broad language in the ordinance. It is so broadly written that it would undermine constitutionally protected rights of churches and religious organizations to conduct their affairs in a manner consistent with our biblical mandates and principles. Churches and religious organizations could be put into a position to be forced to hire people who directly oppose the Bible’s teachings on gender and sexual activity. Churches and religious organizations could be forced to provide facilities and any or all services desired by people who self-identify as transgender. Our Christian Radio Station could be forced to promote events and organizations directly opposed to the teachings of God and His Word.

We appealed to the DePere City Council to take some time, consult with legal experts, and rewrite the ordinance in a way that would provide constitutionally protected rights of churches and religious organizations. They disregarded our appeal, passing the bill with Mayor Mike Walsh casting the tie-breaking vote for the ordinance.

This has forced our hand as Christian leaders and 5 churches in DePere along with Q90 FM Christian Radio, supported by The Pacific Justice Institute, have filed a legal challenge in Brown County Court asking the court to direct the City of DePere to rewrite the ordinance in a way that protects the freedoms of religious expression and speech guaranteed to churches and religious organizations by the United States Constitution, the State of Wisconsin Constitution and backed up by historic case law. The Court has agreed to hear our petition.

We harbor no ill will toward anyone struggling with the identity of their gender. But we also know that God and His Word offers hope to everyone no matter what we struggle with. We acknowledge that all people should be respected and loved as God’s Word teaches. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died on a cross so that sinful men could be reconciled to God. Every human being ever born has been tainted by our sin and rebellion against the God who created us and wants us to live with Him for eternity. We are all sinners. The various sins every one of us struggle with are equally distasteful and rebellious in the eyes of God no matter what they are. And it is only by the grace of God that we receive once we confess our sinful nature and ask for God’s forgiveness that can provide us peace and joy. As Christians this is the message we want to freely share with everyone no matter what our struggles.

But we cannot remain silent as the City of DePere passes legislation that directly contradicts our legal freedoms as Christian Churches and non-profit organizations---legislation that mandates we as Christian organizations violate our deeply-held biblical views on gender and sexuality. We ask you to pray for us and all parties involved that this issue be resolved in a peaceful, God-honoring way.

— The Board of Directors, Lakeshore Communications, Inc. (Q90 FM)