



# Impact

## NEWS & NOTES

■ The 2016 presidential exit polling reveals little change in the political alignments of U.S. religious groups. Those who supported Republican candidates in recent elections, such as white born-again or evangelical Christians and white Catholics, strongly supported Donald Trump as well. Groups that traditionally backed Democratic candidates, including religious “nones,” Hispanic Catholics and Jews, were firmly in Hillary Clinton’s corner. Although some evangelical leaders such as Russell Moore and Max Lucado remained firmly against Trump, many other evangelical leaders such as Robert Jeffress and Jerry Falwell, Jr. were enthusiastic Trump supporters. Fully eight-in-ten self-identified white, born-again/evangelical Christians say they voted for Trump, while just 16% voted for Clinton. Evangelicals of color, however, preferred Clinton. These evangelicals

represent two in five of all evangelicals. Trump’s 65-percentage-point margin of victory among voters in this group – which includes self-described Protestants, as well as Catholics, Mormons and others – matched or exceeded the victory margins of George W. Bush in 2004, John McCain in 2008 and Mitt Romney in 2012. About 57 percent of eligible voters cast ballots this year, down from 58.6 percent in 2012 and 61.6 percent in 2008, which was the highest mark in 40 years. Turnout still remained well above levels for most presidential election years from 1972 to 2000 but down from 70-80 percent in the nineteenth century.

Pew, 11/9; FiveThirtyEight, 11/11; Christian Headlines, 11/9

■ Colorado has become the sixth state to allow a so-called “right to die” for people who are terminally ill. The proposition allows people who have been diagnosed with six months or less to live to end their lives. Patients would have to be diagnosed by two separate doctors and be deemed mentally competent. They would also have to self-administer the medication. Oregon became the first state to pass such a law, followed by Washington, California, Vermont, and now Colorado. This could spell trouble for those terminally ill patients who want coverage for life-saving measures because insurance agencies have already shown that they will

use assisted-suicide legislation to deny coverage of certain treatments. Time, 11/8; FACT, 11/11

■ Voters in California, Maine, Massachusetts and Nevada approved recreational marijuana initiatives on Tuesday, joining Alaska, Colorado, Oregon, Nevada and Washington which had approved the drug’s recreational use earlier. Arizona voters closely rejected the issue. Maine’s proposal passed very narrowly and will allow people to cultivate, distribute and sell marijuana set to be taxed at 10 percent and subject to local restrictions. California has long been seen as a bellwether by both supporters and opponents of marijuana reform. The state is home to about 12 percent of the U.S. population. Given the size of the state’s economy and the economic impact of the marijuana industry there, California’s adoption of legal marijuana could prompt federal authorities to rethink their decades-long prohibition on the use of marijuana. However, a Trump administration may stop that notion.

Wash Post, 11/8; Fox News, 11/10

■ On Tuesday voters in Florida, Arkansas, North Dakota, and Montana all voted in favor of “medical marijuana,” following 25 states (and the District of Columbia) had previously legalized the drug for medical purposes. The term “medical marijuana” refers to the use of the unprocessed plant or

its basic extracts to treat a disease or symptom, although it is not considered a medication due to uncontrolled variations in content and dose. Though the plant contains more than 100 cannabinoids, THC and CBD are being explored for a variety of medical and possibly mental-health applications. Though physicians cannot write a prescription for marijuana, a doctor may be able to recommend or to certify its use. Some states require users to carry a special state-issued identification card. The AMA states that that they do not endorse “state-based medical cannabis programs, the legalization of marijuana, or that scientific evidence on the therapeutic use of cannabis meets the current standards for a prescription drug product.”

Wash. Post, 11/8; Weekly, 11/11

■ The ACLU has filed a federal lawsuit against Kentucky county clerk Kim Davis to recoup \$233,000 in legal fees and costs that it garnered from trying to force Davis to violate her conscience and sign her name to Rowan County same-sex “marriage” licenses. After serving the jail time, Davis took the names of county clerks off the licenses. She was granted that accommodation, first by the governor’s executive order and then by legislation. Davis was honored by the Family Research Council with their “Cost of Discipleship Award” for her stance. The

ACLU lawsuit to force Davis’ name on homosexual licenses was dismissed outright. Now, the ACLU is suing again, for legal fees it incurred in the first suit last fall.

FACT, 11/11; Life Site News, 11/7

■ A Christian couple have been blocked from adopting their two foster children after expressing concerns about them being raised by a gay couple. The married couple, who have not been named and have looked after the children since earlier this year, admitted that when told that a gay couple may adopt the youngsters they “expressed a degree of shock and asked if this was a ‘joke.’” Two days later they formally applied to adopt the foster children themselves but were turned down. The council said that their views about gay parenting were “concerning” and “could be detrimental to the long-term

needs of the children.” The couple stated, “We love everyone, regardless of sexual orientation, and we love the children and believe that they would benefit from the foundation offered by a mother and a father.”

Christian Today, 11/7

■ Restrictive speech zones at ten Maricopa County Community College District campuses in Arizona have been eliminated, thanks to the work of Alliance Defending Freedom on behalf of two students. The college had restricted expressive actions by students to designated areas during certain hours and only with prior permission. The district has revised its policy to no longer contain these restrictions and must also pay \$15,000 in attorneys’ fees because the students were forced to go to court to vindicate their constitutionally protected freedoms.

FACT, 11/11; ADF, 11/7

In ye name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwritten ... by ye grace of God having undertaken, for ye glorie of God, and advancemente of ye Christian faith, and honour of our king & countrie, a voyage to plant ye first colonie in ye Northerne parts of Virginia... doe by these presents solemnly & mutually in ye presence of God, and one of another, covenant & combine our selves together into a civill body politick, for our better ordering & preservation & furtherance of ye ends aforesaid...”

— THE MAYFLOWER COMPACT (1620)

Storms blew the Pilgrims too far north to be under Jamestown’s government, so they created their own, the Mayflower Compact. It was the first constitution written in America. Originally funded by investors such that all capital and profits were held in common, Pilgrim Governor William Bradford described the system to be a failure and said, “God in His wisdom saw that another plan of life was fitter for them” – *individual capitalism* – “So every family was assigned a parcel of land ... This was very successful... and gave far better satisfaction.”

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■ Attainment of a four-year college degree in the U.S. varies by religion, with Hindus, Unitarians, Jews, Anglicans and Episcopalians ranging from 77% to 56%, respectively and Jehovah Witnesses, American Baptists and Church of God members having the lowest percentage (11-12%). About one in five Southern Baptists have college degrees (19%) trailing Presbyterians (U.S.A) at 47% and Catholics with 26%. Pew, 11/4

■ The Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem's Old City is Christianity's most hallowed shrine. It's believed by many that the rock-cut tomb at the heart of the church was where the body of Jesus Christ was once laid. In late October, for the first time in centuries, a team of conservationists and researchers removed a marble slab that lay in a rotunda at the center of the complex. Archeologists worked non-stop work over the course of 60 hours, finding another marble slab with a cross carved into its surface. By the night of October 28, just hours before the tomb was to be resealed, the original limestone burial bed was revealed intact inside the original limestone cave walls,

consistent with Gospel accounts. Its location traces to the time when Constantine's representatives arrived in Jerusalem around A.D. 325 to locate the tomb and were pointed to a temple built by the Roman emperor Hadrian some 200 years earlier. Historical sources suggest that Hadrian had the temple built over the tomb to assert the dominance of Roman state religion at the site venerated by Christians. According to Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea, the Roman temple was razed and excavations beneath it revealed a rock-cut tomb. The top of the cave was sheared off to expose the interior, and a church was built around it to enclose the tomb. Beginning in the 12th century, two Muslim families have been the gatekeepers of the church, a tradition that continues today. Wash. Post, 11/1

■ Churches destroyed a year ago by Islamic extremists and police in a Sharia-ruled province of Indonesia have still not been rebuilt because of discrimination against Christians by local authorities, say church leaders. However, despite the troubles, church membership is climbing. Eleven churches were demolished last year, the members of six continue

to meet in tents. The rest have joined other churches, but many live in fear of further violence.

World Watch Monitor, 11/11  
 ■ Two hundred Iranians and Afghans recently converted from Islam to Christianity and were baptized into their new faith. Christianity has been growing in Iran despite persecution. Mark Howard of Elam Ministries, which reported on the baptisms, stated, "Twenty years ago, everyone thought there were 2,000-5,000 believers in Iran." Now, however, he says there is an estimated 300,000 to 400,000. "We see incredible opportunity," he said, "reaching Persian speaking refugees in Europe, planting churches in Iran — people are so open right now." Christian Headlines, 11/9

■ The Christian church in India is growing to an estimated 25 to 60 million despite the also increasing persecution against Christians. One megachurch, Calvary Temple located in Hyderabad can hold as many as 35,000 people in each of its five worship services. "Many Americans think nothing is happening among Christians in India," the pastor of Calvary Temple said. "We have to change that opinion." But while Christianity is growing in India, so is Christian persecution. There are about one billion Hindus in India and many of them are hostile toward Christians. Christian Headlines, 11/7

WHERE ARE WE, AND WHERE ARE WE HEADED?

The Election, the Culture, and the Church

by John Stonestreet

For most Americans, the results of Tuesday's presidential elections came as a shock, even a surprise, and for many, a bit of a relief.

That feeling of relief is understandable. While there's no way to be sure what will happen over the next four years, Christians may very well have gained a reprieve in areas such as religious freedom and attempts to impose the new sexual orthodoxy and gender ideology on our schools.

So relief? Yes. But I'd caution against elation, because what happened on Tuesday was more of a reprieve than a vindication. A close read of Tuesday's results, beyond the presidential race, shows that the cultural trends we've been talking about on Break-Point for years continue unimpeded.

The saddest example is Colorado voters' approval of doctor-assisted suicide by a two-to-one margin. I warned on this broadcast that so-called "right to die" invariably becomes a duty to die. I reminded my fellow Coloradans that in a state currently in the midst of an epidemic of teen suicide, approving doctor-assisted suicide sends the wrong message.

But it didn't matter. The siren song of unlimited personal autonomy and self-definition proved irresistible to a large majority of Coloradans.

And a similar dynamic was at work in the various ballot initiatives concerning marijuana. Voters in California, Massachusetts, and Nevada joined Colorado and Washington in legalizing marijuana outright. As of this writing, the result in Maine is too close to call, although supporters of legalization have already declared victory.

Meanwhile, voters in Florida, Arkansas and North Dakota approved so-called "medical marijuana" use. I say "so-called" because if history is any indication, these laws amount to legalization by just another name.

Only Arizona, thanks largely to the efforts of the Council for Arizona Policy,

bucked the trend for legalized weed.

So, all in all this was a bad night for the idea that human good involves something other than unlimited personal freedom and pleasure.

And no matter how much relief we feel over the defeat of what would certainly have been a radically pro-choice, anti-religious freedom Clinton administration, the serious moral concerns about the man who was just elected president remain, as do the serious moral concerns about the nation that elected him, and those evangelical leaders who went on record saying that character no longer matters in a leader.

So where does all this leave us today? How will we use this reprieve? Well first of all, we should, as the Bible instructs us, pray for those in authority. We should also pray for President-Elect Trump to surround himself with wise and godly counselors, and to act justly, wisely, and rightly.

Beyond that we should support any of his policies that promote the common good. We should urge him to protect the unborn, as well as those who believe in traditional marriage, and to safeguard religious freedom.

But what we can't do is fall prey to the political illusion. As Chuck Colson liked to say, the Kingdom of God never arrives on Air Force One. Too often Christians lose sight of this basic truth and have allowed themselves to become court preachers instead of prophets.

But prophets we must be. The church's duty is to speak truth to power, especially when the power doesn't want to hear it. If Jesus is Lord, no one else is.

As Rod Dreher stated in part to answer the question: "What has the 2016 election revealed about the state of the Church?" "A nation with a strong Church would not have had to choose between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton." He warns against worldliness, in which we can "mistake this moment for one of triumph, and fail to read the signs of the times."

ENTERTAINMENT NOTES

★★NEW MOVIES

	Quality	Moral	Age
<i>Arrival</i>	PG-13 +4	-2	T/A
<i>Almost Christmas</i>	PG-13 +3	-2	T/A
<i>Shut In</i>	PG-13 +2	-3	T/A

A- Adult, T-Teen, OT- Older Teen

Film "Quality" is an estimate (+1 to +4) of appeal for the intended audience or age group. "Moral" rating ranges from extremely objectionable (-4) to very good (+4). [movieguide.org; pluggedin.com](http://movieguide.org; pluggedin.com)