



CORE

CULTURE: We lovingly engage culture to reach people with Jesus.

June 30, 2024

1. What does it mean for CrossWinds to engage culture?

For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.

1 Corinthians 9:19–23 (ESV)

2. Where does the EFCA stand on current cultural issues?

- A. We are NOT adherents of the secular “Social Justice” movement as held in progressive circles, BUT we do believe that biblical justice has social implications, particularly in protecting those who are most vulnerable and marginalized.**

And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

Matthew 22:37–39 (ESV)

For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.’ Deuteronomy 15:11 (ESV)

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

James 1:27 (ESV)

Did not your father eat and drink and do justice and righteousness? Then it was well with him. He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well... But you have eyes and heart only for your dishonest gain, for shedding innocent blood, and for practicing oppression and violence.” Jeremiah 22:15b–17 (ESV)

Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is generous to the needy honors him. Proverbs 14:31 (ESV)

When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen... cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek

justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause.
Isaiah 1:15–17 (ESV)

So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. Galatians 6:10 (ESV)

- B. We are NOT “woke” in the sense of having embraced a progressive ideology that is grounded in Critical Theory rather than the Bible, BUT we do see the need to be awakened to the global and indeed cosmic impacts of sin, including racial injustice, and to be attuned to the biblical call for gospel-driven efforts toward reconciliation and restoration.**

For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility. Ephesians 2:14 (ESV)

All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians 5:18–19 (ESV)

- C. We are NOT adherents of “Critical Race Theory” that reduces all racial inequities to a struggle between oppressor and oppressed and presents a worldview that is contrary to the Scriptures, BUT we do believe that the questions and challenges it raises stir us to recall critical biblical truths that we may have neglected and require our attention.**

“I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the peace offerings of your fattened animals, I will not look upon them. Take away from me the noise of your songs; to the melody of your harps I will not listen. But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” Amos 5:21–24 (ESV)

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:28 (ESV)

- D. We are NOT “Christian Nationalists” who believe the federal government should declare the United States a Christian nation or who believe that Americans are “God’s chosen people,” BUT we do believe that a patriotic love of one’s nation is appropriate and that Christians should be good citizens who may freely advocate for God-honoring public policies.**

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. Romans 13:1–2 (ESV)

- E. We do NOT believe that political means can establish the kingdom of God, BUT we do believe that God has appointed governing authorities to do good and that, for citizens in Christ’s kingdom, King Jesus’ rule and reign transcends all other citizenships and partisan ideologies and transforms how we live in the world.**

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.

Romans 13:1 (ESV)

Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

1 Peter 2:17 (ESV)

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior. 1 Timothy 2:1–3 (ESV)

- F. We do NOT believe that a person's biological sex should be separated from their self-perception as a man or a woman nor that the body should be altered when it does not conform to that self-perception, BUT we do believe that some people experience a distressing struggle between these two and that we must treat those who struggle in this way with love and compassion as we seek to help them, with the truth and power of the gospel, toward the wholeness of a biologically-sexed identity grounded in God's "very good" design in creation as male and female.**

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. Genesis 1:27 (ESV)

"A woman shall not wear a man's garment, nor shall a man put on a woman's cloak, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD your God."

Deuteronomy 22:5 (ESV)

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2 (ESV)

- Walt Heyer — www.sexchangeregret.com

- G. We are NOT egalitarian in our understanding of the roles and functions of men and women in the church, BUT we do believe that the gifts and ministries of women are essential to the health and fruitfulness of churches and ought to be sought out and multiplied in ways that arise from and are consistent with our complementarian convictions, as reflected in our EFCA ordination policy.**

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:28 (ESV)

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, Ephesians 5:25 (ESV)

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Ephesians 5:22–23 (ESV)

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you. Hebrews 13:17 (ESV)

Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.

1 Timothy 2:11–14 (ESV)

- H. We do not believe in the annihilation of those who die apart from Christ, but in their eternal conscious punishment. Among the kinds of suffering we ought to seek to alleviate, this is the most grievous, and it is our urgent duty and God-given privilege to seek to alleviate it by proclaiming the gospel and calling all people to believe the gospel by repenting and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ.**

“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels... and these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.’” Matthew 25:41, 46 (ESV)

They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction... 2 Thessalonians 1:9 (ESV)

...just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire. Jude 7 (ESV)

...he also will drink the wine of God’s wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name.”

Revelation 14:10–11 (ESV)

Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him. John 3:36 (ESV)

3. Where do EFCA pastors stand on these issues?

- **Point 5:** We do not believe that political means can establish the kingdom of God. 98% of EFCA lead pastors agree.
- **Point 6:** We do not believe that a person’s biological sex should be separated from their self-perception as a man or woman, nor that the body should be altered when it does not conform to that self-perception. 98% of EFCA lead pastors agree.
- **Point 7:** We believe that the gifts and ministries of women are essential to the health and fruitfulness of churches and ought to be sought out and multiplied in ways that arise from and are consistent with our complementarian convictions, as reflected in our EFCA ordination policy 90.4% of EFCA lead pastors agree.
- **Point 8:** We believe in eternal conscious punishment. Among the kinds of suffering, we ought to seek to alleviate, this is the most grievous, and it is our urgent duty and God-given privilege to seek to alleviate it by proclaiming the gospel and calling all people to believe the gospel by repenting and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. 96% of EFCA lead pastors agree.