

# PASTOR'S NICKEL

## Politics and the Church



*Pastor's Nickel*

On a recent pastoral visit I got into a bit of a discussion about politics. In that moment I was keenly aware that I was there as a pastor and as a representative of the church of Christ. I believe that the church should never take a stand in advocating one political party or candidate over another.

Rather, in accordance with Belgic Confession Article 36 and the over-riding biblical message, the church needs to recognize that the governing authorities are placed there by God and that they have the burden of responsibility for providing just laws in the political sphere. The church's role is to pray for these leaders, treat them with honour and respect even when we disagree with them, pay taxes, and be subject to the government obeying them in all things that are not in conflict with the Word of God. That does not mean blind obedience, but that we affirm things that our leaders do well that reflects the heart of God such as compassion, creation care, religious freedom and peacemaking while also calling them to task for things that are in conflict with God's will such as militarism, greed, favouritism, exploitation or laws that place an unfair burden on those who are least able to bear them. The church maintains its independence from politics so that we can speak prophetically into our current reality not burdened by political affiliation, but equipped with the Word of God. *That's my nickel. Pastor Bob*