



St. Francis Ministerial Association  
Jeff Landers, First Christian Church Pastor

# FAITH-BASED TOBACCO CONTROL ADVOCACY

# Introduction

- ⦿ Meeting with Dr. Miller in October 2008
  - Concerns about the nature of the work
  - Concerns about the time and effort involved
- ⦿ Meeting with Travis and Heidi in November 2008
  - Concerns about the nature of the work dispelled
  - Concerns about the time and effort involved dispelled

# The Nature of the Work

- ◎ The second greatest commandment Jesus gives is to love our neighbors as ourselves.
  - Second-hand smoke is a very real danger.
  - Just telling people that it is a danger is not enough. (“Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, ‘Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? (James 2:15-16).”)

# The Nature of the Work

- The proclamation of the good news of Jesus is not unconnected with meeting physical needs. (“I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus. You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’” (Acts 20:21, 34-35).
- Therefore, the work of educating people on the dangers of second-hand smoke and doing what we can to prevent it does not necessarily fall outside the scope of Christian ministry.

# The Time and Effort Involved

- It would be worth it because this was an opportunity to live in love for the members of our community.
- It would be worth it because it allowed us to partner with members of the community to do this work.
- It was worth it because we believe this will pave the way to address the spiritual needs of our community as well.

# The Bottom Line

- ⦿ As the executive director for my church family's organizational affiliation once said, "There's no more difficult group to work with than a group of ministers."
- ⦿ There are very deep biblical and theological differences between us as ministers, especially related to the good news of Jesus.
- ⦿ Though we find it very difficult to work together in areas of preaching and teaching, we find it very easy to work together for social reform.

# The Bottom Line

- ◎ This is why the purpose statement in our constitution reads the way it does: “The purpose of the St. Francis Ministerial Association is to encourage cooperation in areas of mutual concern – ***social issues*** and community worship services within the area.
- ◎ Since being in St. Francis and being involved with the ministerial association, there has not been an effort that has fostered as much cooperation and unity as this project has.

# Conclusion

- ⦿ This work aligns very well with Christian principles and ministry.
- ⦿ This work is worth our time and effort because it gives us opportunities to work with and benefit our community.
- ⦿ This work is what brings a spirit of unity among our fellow ministers which is difficult to achieve in other areas.
- ⦿ Therefore, we are excited about this work and moving forward to prevent tobacco use in St. Francis.