

**Weston Wamp:**

I'm Weston Wamp. I've got the privilege of serving as the senior political strategist at Issue One and want to say welcome to all the folks who are going to join us both in the webinar. In the last 30 minutes, we'll open it up to questions, but also last time we did one of these, we had about 2,000 people join us on Facebook, so welcome to that crowd and folks who watch this after the fact on YouTube.

At Issue One, a lot of our time is spent tilling soil and that soil is ground that we believe Republicans and Democrats ultimately can find common ground on nonpartisan issues that make government more functional, and more accountable, and hopefully more transparent. And in doing that work, you find pretty quickly that the real common denominators in life like our faith overshadow political party, especially, if you're willing to enter those conversations and let your guard down a little bit.

And that's really the inspiration for why we're here today, and just grateful to all of you for joining us, and I invite you all as I introduce the co-hosts here, I invite you like I did them to interrupt, and interject, and let it be as conversational as you want it to be. But I've got some questions I'll ask as we go. But let me introduce our two co-hosts.

First is former Democratic Congressman from Indiana who was a member of the 9/11 Commission and most recently served as the U.S. ambassador to India, which I've learned is our second largest diplomatic post, Tim Roemer. And my dad Congressman Zach Wamp who I'll pass it to first and then you can introduce your former colleague, Ambassador Roemer.

**Former Rep. Zach Wamp:**

Thanks, Weston. I want to thank all four of our panelists for joining us. We did this a couple of months ago with Dr. Richard Land and Michael W. Smith, and a bunch of younger people. Weston has recruited some young people here today that are involved in faith because in my home, as you can see we're multi-generational. Both of my grown children, they grew up in a Southern Baptist church. And we're pretty hardcore about walking the walk and being faithful, but at the dinner table, we'd let our guard down. We would argue, we would debate.

And I think frankly that brings about the ability to reconcile and to try to find unity, and walk in the light with each other. So that's the purpose of all this. Issue One is the most significant nonpartisan reform organization in the country. About six years ago, it was created and Ambassador Roemer and I had the privilege of co-chairing what's called the ReFormers Caucus. This is over 200 former members of Congress, Cabinet officials, governors, all have served at a responsible level, almost evenly divided between Democrats and Republicans, working on several fronts to try to restore confidence in the institutions of government, because it has eroded.

And politics has taken over some of the traditions of public service, which I grew up believing was nobility. That if you were serving the public, sometimes that meant elected office, not just nurses, and teachers, and policemen, but public servants could actually be elected officials.

Today, elected officials, I don't know where we rank, but we're somewhere close to lawyers and used car salesmen, but it's not good, and we're trying to restore confidence. Weston pitched trust and truth as two topics that we want to explore today.

We've got a real distinguished panel. Thank you so much for your time. But Tim Roemer and I served together in Congress for like 10 or 12 years before he became U.S. ambassador in the Obama administration to India. We'd play basketball together in the afternoon, we'd sweat together, we traveled together. We would debate together. He's a Blue Dog Democrat from Indiana, and I was a conservative Republican from Tennessee, and we got along, we were friends, and we actually trusted each other.

And so as a result for the last four years in the middle of a real tribal environment, we've trusted each other and we've brought a lot of people together around things that we can agree to, to try to build unity and try to restore confidence. That's what we're about. This is an extension of that because as the Republican co-chair of the ReFormers Caucus, I've continued to say, "We need to have these faith dialogues," because I've seen Pastor Jeffress and Pastor Franklin since Sunday utter the words, "President-elect Biden," which a lot of Republicans haven't uttered.

But in order to build unity, steps have to be taken and trust has to be laid out. And so those are the topics today. I don't think we need to talk about Trump and Biden as much as we need to talk about how do we bring the country together around the things that unite us. There've been special moments. Ambassador Roemer was a 9/11 commissioner. After 9/11, I was in Congress when all that happened. Man, you're talking about a moment of... a month of unity followed by return to division. And so how can we find those ways to come back together? That's what brings together.

Tim and I will jump in and out, but we really want to hear from you, but that's sort of a primer. And I want to pitch it to my — he calls me his "wingman," so I'll just say my partner. I think I'm the oldest of the two of us, so you need to respect me. Ambassador Tim Roemer, the co-chairman of the ReFormers Caucus of Issue One. Tim.

**Former Amb. Tim Roemer:**

Thank you, Congressman. I really appreciate the nice introduction about basketball, and trust, and patience, and respect for one another. Weston, thank you for setting this up. I really appreciate your hard work, and diligence, and smarts to do this. I'm honored to be with the four other panelists who work, and write, and preach, and act on such important issues in our country and our communities today. I can't think of more important things, more important people to be talking to than people that are in our churches, and synagogues, and mosques, and throughout the country who are prayerful people and looking for solutions, and looking for answers, and looking for hope.

I'll just start on a story. When we were raising our kids, I'm a Catholic, and one of the first things we taught our four kids was the Lord's Prayer, and we all know it ends with, deliver us from evil, amen. Our youngest is a girl, Grace, and she was about eight at the time and she had

memorized the prayer. She said, "Dad, I want you to bring me upstairs and I'm going to say it for you right before bedtime."

And she went through the prayer, she got to the end and she said, "And deliver us some eagles. Amen." And I looked at her, I thought I was going to correct her. And I said, "You know what? That's a pretty good ending. That's a positive ending rather than a negative ending." I really liked the hope in that. I think I'm going to begin to say it that way. And that's what all you folks do for us. And for Congressman Wamp and I, and Weston, you give us hope when we're sitting out in the pews. You tell us how we can be better people and better people in the public square.

One of the things, if we can talk about these things, one of the things is to pray for our new elected leaders, to wish them well and success. Republican, Democrat, it's a good place to start. How do we have respectful conversations in the public sector, in the public square? I look forward to the four of you giving us some answers.

Congressman Wamp has just talked about, he and I came together at Issue One. It wasn't magic, it was hard work. It was trust, it was patience, it was respect to one another. And knowing that I knew he had my back all the time. If I was going to go out and say something, and take a risk, and come to his side a little bit more across the aisle, I knew he'd have my back and I'd have his. I know what kind of man he is, what kind of father he is. That his grandkids call him Chief and love them dearly, and that's one of the most important things in his life.

Those things add to our ability to come together across the aisle and try to get this country working on things together. The ReFormers Caucus as Zach mentioned is 200 former members of Congress, Republicans and Democrats, Tea Party people and progressives that agree on the cause of cleaning up our government. How do we try to give the average American a voice again so they can respect our system and not believe that the special interest or the money interests are in line ahead of them? That their voice is going to be heard? That's something Zach and I agreed on and we put together 200 other people that will do it.

And I think there's an agenda for President-elect Biden to work across the aisle on. There are things, criminal justice reform, broadband access, whether it's the inner city or the rural communities, people of color or people in rural communities that don't have access for their kids to school. These are things that all of us in the faith community I hope could talk about. And maybe we disagree, but at least to talk like we are today, I think is a hopeful sign.

Weston, thank you again for bringing us together. My wingman, my partner, Zach, thank you for the opportunity for the next hour to do this. And most importantly, I look forward to hearing from the people that are working these things all the time and your faith in our country.

**Weston Wamp:**

Thanks ambassador. I mentioned to all of you by email that as I had thought about where we are as a country and the divide that hopefully we can narrow and close to those who are willing to see the world that way, trust feels like it's got to be a prerequisite. That's where there's

certainly a lack of it today. You hear a lot of talk about healing, and I think there's a lot of folks, particularly in my part of the country who are asking the question, "How can we heal when there's been so much bad faith on the other side?" Whatever the other side might be.

So I want to start with Mindy Belz. You've covered real conflict. There's been a lot of hyperbole, I think, in this political cycle about how bad things have been in America, but you've literally covered the wars in six or so countries. What have you seen as an impetus for reconciliation around the world? And what actions have you seen that help reestablish trust where it's been broken?

**Mindy Belz:**

That's a great question and I just first of all, I want to thank you for framing it that way, because I think one, I think this gets at where we are in our political conversations in the U.S., is that we aren't maybe paying attention to the world. I was in Beirut shortly after the massive explosion that happened there at the port in August. The thing had dropped off the news cycles here within 24 hours. It was the fourth largest explosion in the history of man.

And it had devastated a third of one of the largest cities in the Middle East, and a really crucial center for transportation, and politics, and terrorism, and everything, and we weren't even paying attention to it. And I think there's real implication to that to how we build trust. We do it in one way, by having perspective. A week or so ago, a huge historic oak tree right up the street, I'm working from home these days, and came down during one of our hurricanes and smashed into a car, hit an apartment building and hurt one of my neighbors just right up the street, and I'm here wondering about my slow internet.

Why is my internet slowing down? Why can't I get my work done? If I just stayed here focusing on that, I would have only thought the problem in the world was my slow internet, but in fact, what was causing my slow internet was the real problem. I think that we've lost our way a little bit that way by losing perspective. We have thought, for instance, in this campaign that mail-in ballots are a big problem, and mail-in ballots are actually a perennial feature of our election. And we've had such a debate over the existence of mail-in ballots.

So a couple of things that I have seen, for most of the last decade for me has been spent in the Middle East and covering conflicts in the Middle East. And the Middle East as a place we all think of as a place of treachery. How do you ever build trust in a place that is so torn with conflict? And two ways that I see it happening, I see it happening even among people we consider bad guys, maybe or strong men. People in the Middle East aren't afraid to put their trust in a strong man if they think first of all that he is committed to what he says he's going to do. And second of all, that he's willing to sacrifice for it.

And I think those are some really basic things that we've lost. I'll give you an example, two people who, leaders in the Middle East who people have very different polarized opinions about them. One is the current president of Turkey, President Erdogan who's caused a lot of trouble in the Middle East, but he's been very consistent. He talks very consistently about wanting to

create what he calls a “neo-Ottoman Empire.” That is why he's invaded Syria. That is why he is now participating in this war, he's causing all kinds of ethnic and religious cleansing of Kurds, now Armenians and Christians along the way.

He's been consistent and people know in that part of the world, they recognize that he's doing what he said he was going to do. Benjamin Netanyahu in Israel is another person who people agree or disagree with him, but he's very consistent in stating what are the interests of Israel and then acting according to those interests. And then the other piece of that is sacrifice. And I think that one of the places where the United States falls down, both domestically and as an international partner is that we often say we want to do something, but then we don't stay the course when it gets to be very difficult.

Our conduct in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been a case in point, and of course, we're not going to spend a lot of time talking about that. But one of the things, we've talked in the Trump administration, President Trump himself talked a lot about defeating ISIS, defeating ISIS and has in many ways done a great job of doing that. But the reality is that ISIS isn't defeated. And so if we aren't steadily doing some things that contribute to that campaign, then we begin to see our position in the world eroded, our trust, our ability to be a trustworthy partner eroded.

And I could talk all day about how I see the churches in the Middle East being trustworthy partners, because they are consistent in their message and because they've been willing to sacrifice for the sake of their communities.

**Weston Wamp:**

Thanks. So if we bring that wonderful global perspective back down, you're in North Carolina, I'm in Tennessee. Our two pastors are both in Georgia, which I said when we organized this, I didn't suspect it or didn't project that Georgia would be so much the center of the political universe. But to our Georgia pastors, you guys are about to navigate yet another election, whether you're prepared for it or not. And as you talked to your congregations, how do we take real steps? And how are you going to talk, not in an esoteric political way.

We'll start with you, Pastor Franklin. When you get in the pulpit over the next few weeks, I thought President-elect Biden, there was one sentence in the speech he gave over the weekend that resonated with me. And he talked about us seeing each other again. There's no question that I think a lot of us want to be in that place where we at least seeing and understanding each other. But how do you encourage your congregations to do that? What does that look like?

**Pastor Jentezen Franklin:**

Well, this past Sunday, what I did was I got up, because my congregation is very divided, it's very diverse. We have seven campuses in the Atlanta area and all of them are very diverse congregations. So what I felt like I needed to do, they know that I've been very much and very consistent as she was saying on the biblical issues. Pro-life, pro-Israel, pro-religious freedom, justice, and equality. All of those things for 30 years, we have kept that singular biblical approach.

But what we did Sunday, and I knew I needed to do for my congregation because it's still very divided racially and every other way, politically. I got up and I said, "We're going to pray." I said, "Anything that you say is explosive." I realized that the moment that I speak like this from this pulpit, because I don't preach politics from my pulpit, but the moment that I talk about the election, that any word that you say can become explosive. So what I said, "We're going to pray." And I said, "We're going to pray for presumptive President-elect, Joe Biden and Kamala Harris. And we're going to pray for President Trump and Vice President Pence."

And I said, "The important thing is that we voted. The important thing is that all of you made your voice heard and you did what is your civic duty and what is your biblical mandate I believe to speak up." And I just really praise the people for doing that. And I said, "Look, now it's out of our hands. It may go into courts, it may go into dispute, it may go into counts and recounts, but it's time for us to come together. And it's time for us to pray for whoever is going to become president needs our prayers."

And so we took a few moments and we prayed together and we prayed and the end, I did conclude by saying, "Regardless of who becomes our president, we're still a pro-life church, we're still a pro-Israel church. We're still..." and I just went down the line and the people clapped, and it was a healing moment. And I also think it's worth mentioning to people in times like this of such great division in a congregation if you're talking about how to come back together.

We had and will have for the next few weeks, communion because the voting booths pulled us apart, probably in reality. But the communion table of Christ pulls us back together. He said, "As often as you eat this meal," listen to the words, "you remember me." The opposite of the word remember is to dismember, to pull apart. But when you have that meal, and one of the requirements that the Apostle Paul taught was to let a man examine himself. Am I bitter? Am I angry? Am I unforgiving? Am I in a place where I truly, truly feel ill toward people because they didn't see politically like I think they should have seen this election?

It all comes back to the focus, as she was saying, the focus now comes back to Christ, and we unify. Because unity is not agreeing on everything, especially in a church. I'll just say this and I'll stop, but in Exodus 28, God said in the old covenant and the Old Testament, "I'll dwell between the Cherubim's wings on the Ark of the Covenant. I'm not going to go to the right wing, I'm not going to go to the left wing." There were two Cherubims and they had been... Their heads, this is all in your Bible, their heads were looking at the mercy seat.

They didn't have to see eye to eye to have unity yet their wings touched. They saw each other through the blood, through the sacrifice. And I guess what I'm trying to say is that we won't always see eye to eye, but we have to come together in unity in Christ. And so that's I think it's acknowledging too that "Whoever will become president when the certified vote is turned in," I said this to my people Sunday, "will be my president. I will pray for, I will submit to in every way that I can. I may disagree on policy and I'll be bold to speak up on those issues, but that person

will become my president and I will honor them and I will show that respect. And I owe them as a Christian, my prayers."

**Weston Wamp:**

I think I jumped into questions and some of you need no introduction, but just for those who might be watching on a live stream and don't know who the panel is made up of. We started with Mindy Belz who is senior editor at WORLD Magazine, and Jentezen Franklin has advised the president and is a pastor of a wonderful church in Gainesville, Georgia, and written a bunch of New York Times-bestsellers. And Angel Maldonado, who is one of the co-founders of AND Campaign, and also pastors at a Georgia church.

What does that look like for you? You hopped up in the pulpit on a Sunday after a historic election. You're going to get up there again for a few Sundays, several Sundays here in the throws of another election. What do you say to encourage people who find themselves really loyal to one of the two tribes here?

**Pastor Angel Maldonado:**

Thank you. First of all, thank you for the opportunity to be on a panel with everybody here and Pastor Franklin for all the work you've done in Georgia. Always grateful for you. One of the things that we've been talking about is how are we to be the church during this time and how are we to be a light for the purpose of the mission? To make sure that we are a source of hope for those who are searching for something greater, something more hopeful than what the world has to offer.

And the first thing I thought about was loving our enemies, and the truth is, is that Jesus starts off in "Matthew 5" saying, "Hey, you've heard about loving your neighbor, but really let's talk about loving your enemy because even pagans can love those who love them." So we were not really distinct simply because of love, we're distinct when we're able to love our enemies. So I asked the question, who is our enemy? Who do we feel most threatened by?

And it's interesting because I went down a list from police officers to Black Lives Matter, to the NRA, to white supremacists, to straight white men, the LGBTQ community. Who do you feel most threatened by? Because I think it's important to identify those people and those groups of people. I think we personified ideologies. And we've given them a face, and a race, and a marital status, and a socioeconomic class, and voting preference, but we fail to give them a soul.

I actually did the same exercise in a predominantly white, private Christian school, K-12 in the suburbs. Actually, it's not even the suburbs, just more of the rural area south of Atlanta. And I went through that list and do you know, there was a point where all the young white girls, teenagers started clapping. And that's when I said, "Straight white men, who is your enemy? Straight white men," and they started clapping. And it threw me off guard, but it helped me to realize that you know what we got to build trust with? Is the next generation.

If we're really going to make a difference, we have to start looking beyond us and start listening to younger people. Many would say, I am a young pastor in my late 30s, and so I would be the next generation even in this circle. But even as I have two daughters, one nine and one five, it was really interesting watching the election through my daughter's eyes, the nine-year-old. She's in fourth grade. And it was good because I was able to see it through a child's eyes and we were able to have conversations about what she was hearing, what she was seeing, because she's seen all the political ads, especially here in Georgia, they're going crazy.

And so we were able to talk about... Because she's like, "Who's good and who's bad?" And we were able to talk about, "It's not about who's good and who's bad. Everybody has strengths, everybody has weaknesses. People stand on different things, but we have to be able to understand where they're coming from." And so I think if we're going to build trust and we're going to build a hopeful future, I think we've got to start listening to the next generation, to the 20-year-olds and the teenagers and say, "Hey, how do you see this?"

Because for me, I'm looking at people with curious eyes. Instead of trying to win all the time and trying to push my agenda or what I believe, I go onto conversations just asking, "What makes you think this way?" For me, it's a big research project and an opportunity to learn how to love people well when I understand where they're coming from. And so I think that's really going to help, even in our one another relationships, we're going into the holidays, we're going home to see family and friends.

And instead of going and trying to push our agendas or trying to win arguments, why don't we go and try to serve, try to understand, and ultimately for the purpose of winning souls, which is more important than winning elections and winning ideological arguments.

**Weston Wamp:**

Thanks, Angel. And our last panelist, who is the most patient. Thank you, Lauren. I spoke to you just a few minutes before we jumped on. Lauren Noyes is the executive director of Faith & Law in Washington. Literally works at the intersection of faith and policy on Capitol Hill. And as we talk about trust, I'm thinking, and I'm just talking to friends of mine who aren't political and you can just feel that they have a distrust in institutions, political institutions.

I grew up in a political family, and so I'm sensitive when I realize that my friends are losing confidence in the institutions that make a democracy what it is. How much is this on your radar screen as we exit — most of us who are in Georgia have got a ways to go here — but as we exit an election year, what are the opportunities that you all see at Faith & Law to, maybe it's legislate, maybe it's clarify, but to restore confidence among the people in our institutions?

**Lauren Noyes:**

It is a desperate need. Confidence and trust has just eroded, and this is a bipartisan issue. It's eroded for all of us and we need to be asking ourselves, if we can't have trust in the integrity of our elections and trust in the basic institutions of our society, what does this really mean for democracy? And so what we do at Faith & Law is we are — when we're not in COVID — we are

in the Capitol and we are bringing together Christians on the Hill, whether they be our members of Congress program or our Hill staff program.

And we bring Democrats and Republicans together. Now, I will tell you, we've got a whole lot more Republicans than we do Democrats, but we bring Christians together and we try and say to each other, "How do we look at kingdom values and a biblical worldview? How do we take that and put that over public policy before we ever think about what our party believes?" And so whenever I tell people what we're doing at Faith & Law on Capitol Hill, people that are out in the country say, "I didn't know this was happening."

This gives me such incredible hope for what's going on in our government. There are good people. There are great young people. We have everybody from interns, to chiefs of staff, to members of Congress who are involved with Faith & Law and who are all coming together and saying, "We want to look at public policy through the lens of Christ." And to me, that's really hopeful because the lens of Christ is not Republican or Democrat. And so we will be able to find some common ground with one another.

One of the main things that we want to do with Faith & Law in 2021, what we're feeling as our primary calling as we enter this year is to say, "How do we stop demonizing one another? How do we be a part of healing? How do we look at each other's hearts?" One thing I like to talk about at Faith & Law is that very deep believers can both care for the poor and they can come to vastly different public policy solutions for caring for the poor. Now, both of their hearts are beautiful to the core.

They both might be serving in soup kitchens and giving much of their money to the poor, but they just have come through their prudence, they have come to a different solution. And what we are trying to get across at Faith & Law is that we as Christians need to come together in all of our various public policy solutions, but say, "Hey, let's look at each other's hearts. Let's get to know one another. Let's be friends, let's build some common ground and care for one another." And that is when we will be a light. And that is when we will well represent the gospel of Jesus, one who is represented by a servant leader who humbled himself.

And so that's what we're trying to do. I have a lot of hope. I see a lot of incredible people. I want to see more Christians coming together, and I want to see what we can do in 2021 to really model coming together around difficult public policy solutions, very complex issues. And maybe showing to people who are Christians who come to completely opposite ends of the spectrum with their solution, but showing, modeling, how can they talk about it with civility? How can they express grace toward one another?

And then I think we'll start seeing some glimpses of some areas to come together and work together on public policy.

**Weston Wamp:**

I proposed to you all that we talk about trust and truth, and all of you spoke really eloquently to what's needed and ways that you can go about healing and reestablishing trust. The truth part of this is real personal to me because a lot of the work that I have done at Issue One and working with younger members of Congress, a lot of times they're conservatives, they might not know a whole lot about specific political reform solutions on the table or campaign finance issues.

And they may even come into the conversation with some level of disagreement or obstinance. And then you'll realize in the conversation that there's shared truth. Before we're done here, I want to talk about truth from the voter perspective. Access to truth is difficult. When I'm thinking about truth, also as we head into a non-election year, and non-election years are cherished in America, because we only get one and then we're back into an election year because of the way Congress works.

But Lauren, what have you seen and where are you hopeful that there may be opportunities to find common truths? For example, there've been some young Republican members who haven't necessarily seen the vision on this reform package or that, but then they realize that there's an opportunity to work across the aisle and transparency. And everybody goes home thinking that they've really advanced the ball for the people that they represent.

It doesn't feel, coming out of the fog of a terribly divisive campaign. It sometimes feels like we don't have anything in common, but I've been around this stuff my whole life and I know that's not true. In fact AND Campaign, we'll get to Angel on the same subject. This is what AND Campaign does so well is they lift up these biblical truths that just cut through a lot of the racial narratives of the day. But are there any specific policy areas you see hope for in the next Congress?

**Lauren Noyes:**

Sure. I felt like one of the best examples in the last Congress was criminal justice reform. And I think an issue like that is another one where we can easily come together and find ways to work with one another. It's just something that we agree about. But I also think that there are, Biden outlined four different areas that he wanted to focus on. COVID-19, economic recovery, climate, and racial equity.

And I honestly think Christians on both sides of the aisle can come together and find some common ground in those areas and perhaps work together. Maybe I'm being a little too hopeful, but I really do think that it's possible.

**Weston Wamp:**

Angel, tell us about the work. When we did this the first time we had both Michael Wear and Justin Giboney, and you're the third part of that tripod. AND Campaign's work is inspirational, but again, I love it because I felt like you could send the most political person you could find AND Campaign's website, you'd have a real hard time figuring out, "Who are these people? Where are they on the political spectrum?"

Give us a little bit of an AND Campaign perspective there, and briefly mention the Prayer and Action Justice Initiative you guys are working on.

**Pastor Angel Maldonado:**

The AND Campaign is just set out to build a coalition of Christians that believe that we don't have to follow the world's push to either side of the polarization of America and say, "Hey, we know we want to be different." AND literally stands for that we can behave, and act, and conduct ourselves with both the compassion of Jesus and the conviction of Jesus. That we don't have to sacrifice our conviction on moral order for justice or for love. And so one of the things we talk about is compassionate and conviction, as well as love and truth.

That we have to be able to speak the truth in the context of love. And that's actually true love. Truth is part of really loving our neighbor and I am hopeful as well. Lauren, I think we can be hopeful, we have to be hopeful, especially as Christians because we're Christians, the best is yet to come. Regardless of what happens in this world, for Christians, the best is always yet to come because we get an eternal perspective, but there are ways now to promote human flourishing.

And yeah, the Prayer and Action Justice Initiative is a way for both sides of the aisle to come together and say, "You know what? What can we agree on?" And yes we can sign a statement and we want to fight for biblical justice, just policing and criminal reform, but also coming together and praying together as Pastor Franklin already talked about, and doing it in a diverse setting. Really being intentional about that, as well as looking for opportunities where we can make a difference in our communities.

And I think one of the things that's often lost is the power of local politics, of a school board, of a city council, and even in small towns is how much good can happen, because that's what politics should be about. And we open it up, talking about serving our fellow brothers and sisters. And also the last thing to that is to be able to give, we have an initiative around COVID about churches helping churches.

We've been able to see some great reconciliation happen through that as churches with more resources helping churches without resources during this time. And in instances where it could be different races or even cultural differences, been able to see that love actually happening in a real form.

**Weston Wamp:**

Pastor Franklin, one of the things that pains me the most about, I think the division of the last couple of months, just in my life is I see on both sides, a lot of the people who are the most spun up. They'll get spun up about a conspiracy theory on either side that's not true or something is grossly exaggerated. And I can't imagine, you guys are going to have a full-blown recount in Georgia. I hope that lays to rest people's concerns, but as believers, we're pursuers of truth.

How do you talk to your congregation about wading through a world that's rife with conspiracy theories. And unfortunately, like the double-edged sword of social media and having super computers in our hands is that, as much as you have immediate access to great information, you also have immediate access to terrible disinformation. So how do you handle that as a pastor?

**Pastor Jentezen Franklin:**

I think as a pastor, my job is not to try to tell people who to listen to and where to go for their resources and getting political answers. My job is when they come to church or when they join online church, is to get them to focus on the word of God and who it says they're supposed to be in the middle of all of this. One way or the other, you're going to have people who are extremely thrilled with the election and people whose candidate is going to lose. These votes are close. We have the most divided nation probably that we've ever had in any of our lifetimes.

And so we better ask this question, how should you act if your candidate wins? And how should you act if your candidate loses? If your candidate wins, are you going to spike the football? Are you going to do the victory dance in the end zone and go on Instagram and trash all the people that you go to church with, and all the people who've been so vocal? Are you going to be arrogant? Are you going to be, I knew God was with my side all the time? Are you going to have a humility about you?

Are you going to know and remember that somebody is watching you and how you respond to that victory? And whether or not you do it with a condescending attitude to them can make all of the difference of whether you build a bridge or you just blow up the thing even worse. And then if your candidate loses, you're going to have to face some issues, too. You're going to have to come back to the sovereignty of God. You're going to have to realize that our faith has never been in a president, it's always been in the king of kings Jesus Christ.

And secondly, you're going to have to answer maybe an even tougher question is, "how will I respond? Will I call this president my president, even though they may offend so many things that I believe for and stand for?" And we know that biblically, our place has to be one of submission and acknowledgment of rendering unto Caesar what is Caesar's, and render unto God what is God's. That's my job, is to get people to focus on the word of God.

The great thing about times like these is there's always been times like these, and all we've got to do is go back to the word of God and find out how they have done it through the times of transition. I'm going to be a Christian, I'm not going to be more a Republican or a Democrat than I'm going to be a Christian. I'm a Christian. I don't believe God's a Democrat, I don't believe God's a Republican. God is God. He's not on one side or the other, He's on His own side, and He says, "Whichever party gets closest to me, vote your values." Vote the word, because the word of God is the will of God.

But you know what? When it's all said and done, we're going to have to come back and focus on the word, not everything that's on the media and all the noise around us.

**Weston Wamp:**

Thanks for that. Mindy, one last question, then I've got one that I want everybody to take, all six of you in order and there'll be a couple of questions that come in from the folks watching. And I'll stay on this, I know this is tricky, and if you're in journalism, maybe it's an even more loaded question, but how can believers be purveyors of truthful content? It kills me, I log onto Facebook and the sweetest lady who I grew up going to church with is sometimes putting the craziest stuff on Facebook.

I'm not talking about a specific person, but you all know that person, and the end of these Facebook posts say, "Go ahead and copy and paste this before Facebook deletes it." And it's the world we live in. There was a Gallup poll earlier this year that showed that 86% of Americans think the media is biased. And, yeah, I'm just curious, you've been in really probably the most difficult lane in journalism as a war reporter.

Where do we go from here? How do believers see through and sift through all this? And what do you think of the state of journalism? If that's not a loaded enough question.

**Mindy Belz:**

That's loaded enough. I think we need to get our planetary alignment in sync. It has been a really difficult season. As somebody who's been in journalism for decades, I would say the last five years and the years of the Trump administration have been incredibly difficult. And I think there are in terms of just things coming at us all the time, in terms of the rancor and division that everyone has been talking about on this panel.

I think a lot of the criticism and frustration, I would say with the media is deserved in a lot of ways. What do I mean by getting our planetary alignment straight? I think we just need to figure out our orbit. Are we orbiting around these issues or what's at the center for us? What is our sun? And so for me, personally as a journalist who also is a believer, I'm grateful for these last few years because I have had to cultivate the discipline of opening my Bible before I opened Twitter.

And that sounds like a really small petty thing, but I think it's super important how personally are we oriented? Are we oriented around the word of God? I'm getting mail all the time, two today that I've seen from people who in the name of Christ are saying very un-Christian things to me. And I sometimes just want to ask, "What's your center here?" And it touches on all the issues that Pastor Franklin and others have brought up.

The second thing in terms of our planetary alignment is what is the presidency? So much of this has been focused on a presidency because we've had a president who is an outsized president. He is constantly sucking the oxygen out of the room, and the media has loved that. And there's no better illustration of how much we in the media have loved that than within hours of AP announcing that Biden had the necessary electoral college numbers, the media was already talking about how Trump was going to run in 2024.

That we couldn't let go of the idea that we might not be able to fill our front pages with something audacious that Trump had said or done. And we have to get off of this. And it's also a problem in the public. And I think one of them is just simply recognizing that we have a government with three equal branches. We have allowed the executive to become far more important in our lives than it should be, and it is keeping us from resolving some of these issues, the issues that Lauren pointed out.

I would throw in the mix, the issue of immigration and refugees. That's an issue where there's broad agreement among the public, where the evangelical church has been very strong in how they want to see justice and mercy applied to the issues of immigration, and especially the issue of refugees. Can we not come together that somewhere between 100,000 and practically zero, we ought to be able to be a country of compassion, allowing refugees into our country. But that's a conversation that shouldn't just be focused on what the president has just said about refugees. It should be focused on what Congress is doing, on what the courts are allowing.

And that is just one issue among many where we need a civic lesson almost in how to apply our voices and our roles as citizens to this government that is three equal branches and not just simply one that is calling the shots.

**Former Rep. Zach Wamp:**

Hey, Weston, before you jump to the next stage, if I could follow up on that because Mindy, that was absolutely beautiful. And for those of you that are just listening, everyone's head was nodding up and down while she was speaking from the far right to the far left and everything in between that there are things that we all agree to are very important. Pastor Franklin, I want you to know, Weston and I, I'm his father, but when they asked me after serving 16 years in Congress, "What are your regrets?"

My only regrets because I serve the king and I try to follow Jesus and I fall short, and I try to stay humble. But my only regrets are not following through on my own personal instincts when I knew what was right and what was wrong. And there's truth, we say, "We want to call balls and strikes." So the Wamps from here on, regardless of party, we want to call balls and strikes. If we know something is right, say it. If we know something's wrong, say it without fear or reservation.

Here's a truth I want to share with you from my perspective, because the first president I ever voted for as a freshman at UNC was Jimmy Carter. Four years later, I was still there. I went back to Woollen Gym and I voted for Ronald Reagan. And I've been a Republican ever since, I've been an activist at every level. The partisan political involvement gave me rise to serve. I spent 12 years in the field doing stuff for our party, and then I had the privilege of serving. But let me tell you, there are days where I'm not a proud Republican. I'm always a proud conservative, but there's days where I'm not a proud Republican.

And I don't think either party has an exclusive on integrity, and I don't even think either party has an exclusive on ideas. And I want people to know the truth that both parties right now have

internal conflicts themselves, let alone across the parties. And both parties are totally capable of taking all this dark money and not telling the truth, and it's all driven by the wrong motives. And as my friend Eric Erickson tweeted last week, if we are worshiping a man or a political party, we're missing the mark, we're worshiping the wrong thing.

I want Tim Roemer to talk about right now, the conflict in the Democratic Party. They almost had a war last week between all these new moderate Democrats who were elected in '18 and the left, the far progressive left, it almost cost them their majority in the House. So it's not just across the aisle, we all have conflicts that we have to be honest about, and we have to find a way to resolve those conflicts, but we almost have to start from a point of vulnerability of telling the truth about it all. I do believe strongly in ideology, but I don't believe either party gets it right. Tim.

**Former Amb. Tim Roemer:**

You make great points, Zach. I'm having such fun listening to people and learning, and that's such a great thing to do. I come from a family where it was very, very common for me to walk in the door from school and see a priest or a nun or somebody from our local church over at our house, at our dining room table, and there to talk to my parents or to just be there, and be in the community and outside their church.

I think I disappointed my parents greatly when I did not go into the priesthood or Catholicism, but they always reminded me that public service was maybe the second best thing to go into because you can affect, and influence, and help the least among us, and have respect for one another. And now more than ever, Zach, it's more important for people of faith, and respect, and hope to be in public service, whether as Angel said at the local level or at the national level, trying to show people by example that the basis of faith, as well as our country and our founders is to respect one another, and to listen to one another, and to explore where we have common ground.

And to seek that understanding as Pastor Franklin said, when we do communion in the Catholic church, nothing is more intimate than when you share bread and when you have a meal together. You come together, that's why it's called communion. And we do this act in church, and then we walk out of the church and all of a sudden people are going right at it again and they forgot about communion, and hope, and respect and so forth.

What gives me such great hope is the local level where we don't have to wait for presidents, we don't have to wait for Congress, we don't have to wait for Washington, D.C. Let me mention a couple of things that are hopeful. Braver Angels is a group of people that get together at the local level and they have conversations. And they might go to one of your churches, pastors, and they bring people together for a day or two at a time on an issue like abortion, where we're taught by the media, sorry Mindy, that people don't have anything in common.

But in fact, Braver Angels finds that there's a lot we have in common to reduce the number of abortions, to help deliver healthcare to poor people, to inform people better of what that decision

means. And we found through this Braver Angels conversation that these two sides could maybe not agree, and maybe not say, "You've changed my mind," but what can we do to respect each other's opinions on this very, very difficult ethical, moral issue?

And then there are groups like Bridge at the place that I went to school, the University of Notre Dame, they're not the Democratic club, they're not the Republican club, they're the bridge between the two. And they bring speakers to campus, a Democrat and a Republican like Zach Wamp and Tim Roemer to sit on the stage together and to show right away that we respect one another. We're not going to call each other names, we're not going to throw bile and hate, and poison at each other. We're going to talk about what we did together in Congress.

And maybe disagree on some policies, but also talk about what we're working on to heal America, and heal people's souls, and let people believe that there's a goodness that can unite us in the future. Those are very important and what you guys have told me today that, Lauren your organization, both the pastors, there are churches that are trying to bring people together to have this conversation. We can do this without the federal government doing it. There's so much we can do together, and that's why this conversation just gives me such hope.

Finally, I'd say, Zach, yeah, the Democratic Party, let's say President-elect Biden is only a one-term president, by 2022, 2023, our party is going to be starting to have some very, very potentially volatile conversations about who's the next leader. Does it need to go farther left? Because a moderate like Joe Biden didn't do enough and was turned back by Congress. So we have to go more toward the revolution. And we've already seen the fight between AOC and people like Conor Lamb from Pennsylvania, a very progressive Democrat and a moderate Democrat start to say, "It was your fault in the election." "No, it was your fault in the election."

I'm trying to tell both sides, "Look, you're both half right, but it doesn't do any of us any good to have that internal fight, and circle the wagons, and say derogatory names about each other." So your talk today gives me great inspiration and I'm just very, very inspired by it.

**Weston Wamp:**

All right. So here's my last question. Ambassador, that was awesome. And you guys get ready because this question is coming at you and my dad also. And we'll let everybody take this one and then we'll open it up to a couple of questions from the floor. Usually when Christians get together, if we spend an hour together, somebody is going to talk about seasons, and so Mindy beat me to it. The last question, Ecclesiastes gives us this great hope that no matter what we're going through, sort of that Pastor Franklin point, we've been there before.

"There's a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens." You all know this. "Time to be born and time to die, time to plant and uproot, time to kill and time to heal, time to tear down time and build. Time to weep and time to laugh, time to mourn and time to dance," on and on. A time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing, it's all just picture of some time of our life. So the question is this to each of you, and we'll start with Lauren because Lauren you've been the most patient and we'll get back to you, and this is a tough one.

What season are we in? Because they feel different. What season are we in now through the holidays while things are recounted and there's uncertainty? And then what season are we in after an inauguration in January? What are these seasons for?

**Lauren Noyes:**

Wow. I can't believe I have to be first. I think right now we're in a little bit of a cooling off season. We're in a little bit of a settling down season. And then I think once we hit January and after the holidays, and we have an inauguration, hopefully we're in a time to heal and a time to build. That's my hope.

**Weston Wamp:**

Mindy.

**Mindy Belz:**

That's a tough one. When you said refrain from embracing, I can't help but think that there's some truth to that as being the season that we're in with COVID. And I think I'm going to strike that somber tone. I don't want to be apocalyptic because I think we can all point to things that have made the season that we've been in. We're learning new things, we're doing new things, we're growing. I feel like the organization I'm part of is growing, but we've also had our growing pains along the way during COVID and when we've not been seeing each other. I'm not traveling like I normally would be, so life is strange.

I think that life is going to get stranger. I think that we as a country have not grappled with the pandemic in a way that is serious and sustainable. And I think that just listening to the people who have battled Ebola, the people who have been watching this now for months and months, they're not hopeful. They're talking about the dark winter and a lot of people made fun of that phrase, but I think there's a real potential that we could be facing a dark winter and that we really are in a season of testing.

And as a test of all the things that we've talked about, of our own personal convictions, of how willing we are and how ready we are to help our neighbors in serious ways, how ready we are to listen to our neighbors and how ready we are going to be to help each other. The nature of this pandemic, we're not going to get out of it by being individuals. It's going to have to be a community effort and a national effort, I think.

One more thing that I'll say about that too is just that we have to reckon with the fact that we now have, I believe a fifth of the COVID cases in the world. We have an outsize burden to bear in this. We have a great country that should help us lead ourselves and others out of this. But I don't think we've grappled with it yet like we're going to have to.

**Weston Wamp:**

The season that felt the most appropriate to me is a time to search and a time to give up. I know that one hit me just rereading. This is a guy who has been through campaigns and knows the

pain, the unique pain of political loss. Pastor Franklin, what season is this one? And then is it a different season after inauguration?

**Pastor Jentezen Franklin:**

I do believe that it is a season where we have to search for middle ground, protect the middle ground. We have such radical extremes on both sides, everybody thinks this is the direction and trajectory that the nation needs to go in, and I believe that the middle ground is what's missing in our nation today. We're not going to all get what we want, but we can find the middle ground. And also, I think it is a tremendous moment in season for true leadership to step up.

We've got to model, those of us with influence, those of us that people see and follow. We have got to model unity. We have got to reach out and show in every way that we can, that we're enlarging our circle of love. That I just don't want people in my life who think like I think, see what I see, agree with what I agree with, but can I know, and can I go to lunch or can I put a picture on Instagram of a friend who is totally the opposite of what I believe politically. And it can't be fake. It's got to be an authentic Christ love that says, "I care about you."

Here in Georgia, I'll give you a quick example, but here in Georgia, one of the candidates that's running as a pastor at the Ebenezer Baptist Church. And I was asked, not by him, but by the Martin Luther King Jr. Organization and Center to come speak at King Day at his church in his pulpit three years ago. And the only two white men that were there on the lineup that day was myself and a guy who I'd never met before, but I've gotten to know him pretty good since, a guy named David Perdue.

And here we are at Ebenezer Baptist Church, the church that Dr. King pastored for so many years, and I was asked to speak. It was a tremendous honor because we have for 30 years in this community modeled an intercultural, interracial, every way diversified congregation, and God has blessed us with thousands and thousands of people. And somehow we've held it together through all of this. It's not been easy, I'll be honest. This has been the most trying season of my 30 years of pastoring.

And people are devastated, and people are broken. We got to remember too, that we no longer have the luxury of disunity. When families are falling to pieces, when addiction is at an all-time high, when marriages are being decimated, somebody has got to step up, and like you said, at some point say "Enough is enough, let's build a bridge." Nitro is what they give somebody with a heart issue, a nitro pill, and it can heal your heart or that same substance can blow up a bridge, and you just got to decide how you're going to use it.

And it's time for us to love like we've never been hurt. And I plan to reach out to others once this election is behind us and show in a public way, unity for people who are different than I am in every way.

**Weston Wamp:**

Amen. At 30 years, you got started pastoring like 14, 15 years old. I had no idea.

**Pastor Jentezen Franklin:**

I was.

**Weston Wamp:**

Hey, Angel, wrap this up. We'll let the two political leaders on the panel finish this one if they've got a thought on seasons, but what strikes you as where we are and where we're headed here?

**Pastor Angel Maldonado:**

That's a great question and that's actually what I was thinking about this morning. And I think the season that we are in now is a season of waiting. And that's not something that we like. We don't like being patient, even the election to have to wait, not even just election night, three, four days, five days, and still now with the recounts where we are being forced to wait. And we don't like that, I don't like that. But we have created this culture and a society where we want immediate results and immediate opinions on every social issue that happens.

And even as a pastor and a leader, so many times, I feel the pull to say something about an issue, to say something about something that has happened, even with police brutality and things that have happened in that way. It was like, "You got to jump on board and say something." It's like, "But we don't even know the investigation yet. We don't know what's happening yet." And so we have to sit back and relax for a second. Let the experts do what they do.

I'm blown away by the amount of random everyday people that have a say on the election process and the voting process. I was blown away by the county election officials who were so prepared and confident on the media. I'm like, "Wow, there they've given their careers to this. Can we just let them handle this?" And so we have to be patient. Proverbs 16:32, "Better a patient person than a warrior." Whoo.

And I think even as we go into 2021 with COVID, we've all wanted this to end. I remember when March 12th, when it all happened, that's actually my anniversary. And so I had an anniversary event planned, and I think everybody was hoping that it would go away in a couple of weeks, and then a couple of months, and then it's become "Well, by 2021," like COVID has a timetable. It's just a bad year, 2021, we're going to wake up and everything's going to be better, and that's just not the case.

So we have to be okay with waiting, with taking every day as it comes. And as Jesus says, "Do not worry about tomorrow. Today has enough trouble of its own." Let's just focus on today, we got to get back to that. Let's focus on today, not worrying about tomorrow. Be the best that we can be today and trust that along the way, God is going to be with us. That if we can depend on Him, and I think that's the season along with patience is a season of dependency.

Dependency that, "God give us this day our daily bread." You're going to take care of us today, and I'm going to trust that. And tomorrow you're going to take care of us as well.

**Former Rep. Zach Wamp:**

Angel, I was thinking this morning on my walk, which I do every morning, the same thing you are thinking about. What an ironic moment that the Masters in Augusta, Georgia began this morning in the fall, and what a picture it is of where we are that usually the Masters is in the spring when we're rebirthing, and things are growing, and the leaves are yellow, and orange, and red, and they're falling off the trees this morning. But I just checked and Tiger Woods is 400 and tied for fourth place on 17th.

So this is a year of who knows what's going to happen. But I believe it's a year where God, and let's say, when we talk about faith. I respect all the Abrahamic religions, and when we speak about Jesus, I follow Jesus, but I respect the other faiths and their part of this conversation because there's some fundamental precepts in all the Abrahamic religions that we can turn to, basically the 10 Commandments.

But I believe God's getting our attention for a reset because if we don't focus on Him, this whole year has shown us, guys, if you got used to the way things were, they're not always going to be that way. If you think that everything happens in the spring, no, this year, some things are going to happen in the fall. Up is down, left is right. This is a year where God is saying, "You're not in charge guys. I am. So look to me, don't look to the president." I'm grateful for the policies that we've seen as a conservative, but I'm not going to look to him.

As much as I respect the presidency, and Jentezen Franklin knows we've been together with the president. And it's not about a party, it's really about, we need to reset. We all need to reset our eyes. That's what this year is, that's what the season is, I believe. We're entering into it. I think Mindy's right, we may have to go through darkness to find light, but we've got to quit looking in the wrong places.

**Weston Wamp:**

Ambassador, you have something to add?

**Former Amb. Tim Roemer:**

I'll try, it's hard to follow this crowd. They're beautiful things you want to reflect on for a while. I think we're between seasons. I think we will determine what happens and what season we go into next. My wife and I try in some spare time, we humbly try to volunteer at the local homeless shelter. And there was a man that used to live there by the name of Mr. Tillman. And Mr. Tillman tragically, he had a lot of different complicating issues in addition to being homeless, medical issues.

And he tragically died one morning out at the bus stop in front of the local library, which is close to the homeless center. And he died out in the cold. I came in the day after he died to do some volunteering work and I heard about it and I was just... I took it personally that why couldn't there have been something that I did to help that man turn his life around or at least protect him from

what happened to him? And one of the young girls who was part of a family of homeless people in the shelter walked up to me and she said, "Oh, Mr. Roemer, did you hear about Mr. Tillman?"

And I said, "Yeah." And I was looking at the negative, "Yeah, he looks like," and I was going to say something, and she looks up at me, she says, "Mr. Roemer, Mr. Tillman was at the bus stop waiting for the bus to heaven. That's where he's going. He's going to heaven." And that just brought such a great perspective to me that I looked at it totally wrong and she was looking at it in a more hopeful way. And as all you folks have said on this call, on this Zoom conference, the sooner the younger generation, like these people can start bringing their perspective forward and giving us that hope, and respecting each other, and working without listening to what Washington's doing, and the bad example we're getting there. Maybe we're going to get through this season, Weston.

Maybe we're going to lead by example and be brave and courageous, and not being sucked into the vortex as Pastors Maldonado and Franklin have said to the left and the right. But we look at that center, we look at ways to bring people together and work on problems like COVID and refugees. Our Catholic church, when we're in our pew, our Catholic priests are talking more these days about refugees and immigration than they are about abortion even. And they think there's an opportunity to work across denominations, and churches, and mosques, and synagogues, and we'll bring the American people together to get some resolution there.

So I'm hopeful, Weston that refugees, and immigrants, and racial justice issues, and COVID relief, there are a core group of issues here that we can work on together. And if we don't do it, the younger people hopefully will that have this perspective that this young girl at the homeless center did.

**Weston Wamp:**

We had a few questions come in that were all pointed in the same direction, so I'm going to ask this question, I'm going to let anybody answer who wants to, and then when we're done, we'll be done. But the concept was this, that Congress and our national politicians, as divisive and nasty as the rhetoric may be, sometimes they actually represent us pretty well. Maybe they are actually a reflection of where the country is. One of the questions, asked it succinctly this way, "What can we do and what can be done to build more civility at a local level so that we might set a higher standard for those who are representing us across the country?"

**Former Rep. Zach Wamp:**

I'll jump in first really quick, because I think we're all like a marriage. Whether we like it or not, if you want to live here, and it's your choice, you become part of the American family and it's like a marriage. If your marriage is not working, it could be 80% your fault, 20%, your wife's fault, or 90/10, or 60/40, but it's both of your responsibility. And it doesn't matter if you're 20% responsible and she's 80% responsible, you've got to initiate reconciliation.

And so if you want to build civility, it's like forgiveness. We have to take the initiative to say, "I'm going to try to be reconciled and to be in unity with you, and whatever I did wrong, I'm sorry."

And begin the process of healing with each other no matter how much we disagree with what you say.

**Weston Wamp:**

Anybody else for the good of the order?

**Pastor Jentezen Franklin:**

I'll speak up right here. I think that was so powerful Representative Zach, and Tim, Ambassador Tim. My mind went back while you were speaking to a dinner that we had with the president and it was a divisive time in America, one of the most divisive days that we faced, and I won't go into detail. And we had dinner that night with the president, a very small setting, and I watched these two men, I watched the spirit of these men. I watched them as they began to build that bridge. There were people of both parties with the president at this dinner.

And it was as tense, you could, as they say, cut it with a knife in the air. It was hard. And I watched God work a miracle, I believe during that dinner that unlike anything, I'll never forget. One of the most amazing things that happened was there was a Marine playing the piano outside the room where we were having dinner. And he had played classical music all night long, and right in the middle at a strategic moment, I'll never forget this. For some reason, he started playing a beautiful praise and worship song called 'What A Beautiful Name It Is, The Name of Jesus.'

And then he started playing 'How Great Thou Art' behind that, and then he went back to playing classical music. And it's almost like to me, it was God saying, "I am in control of this house, this place, this nation. And if my people will be the light, if my people will lead the way, if my people will humble themselves and pray and seek my face, it doesn't really matter what happens. God has a plan and He knows how to intervene, He knows how to get in."

I know after that dinner, I'll say this and I'll close, but after that dinner, I had to go to that Marine. I'm a musician and I play piano, and I play sax, and so I notice music. That's why when that music went off, my ear went to it. And so I went to that Marine that was playing the piano and I said, "Did I hear things? Or did you actually..." Because those gentlemen that were in that room, you know what happened that night and it was a beautiful thing, it was a God thing that changed the atmosphere that calls the spirit of unity to come into that room.

And I asked that Marine, I said, "Was I hearing things or did you play 'What A Beautiful Name It Is, The Name of Jesus'? And did you play 'How Great Thou Art'?" And he said, "I sure did." And he said, "I don't know why I did it. I just felt like I wanted to play those songs." And it's like God has people in our government, I'm convinced of this, that at the right moment, at the right time, if we will pray, there'll be like a light and there'll be that force that can change the atmosphere and move us into the spirit of unity. And that's what I'm praying for. It's an honor to be on here with all of you and I'm praying for our nation.

**Weston Wamp:**

Hey, so Angel, I heard, and you had shared it on Twitter. I heard Pastor Franklin pray for the president and the president-elect and it was inspiring. And that was a great closer. How about you just pray us out of here and we'll wrap this thing up?

**Pastor Angel Maldonado:**

Will do. Let's go ahead and pray.

Father God, we love you and we thank you God for your grace and your mercy, God. I thank you so much for the men and women on this panel, and honestly all across this nation in positions of power and influence who want to bring you glory, who want to seek the well-being of our neighbors and see human flourishing, God. I thank you, God. I'm saddened that these are not the voices that get all the attention at times, Lord God, and I pray that that'll change, Lord.

I pray Father God that you will continue to just elevate and give more influence to those who are really striving to bring peace and to be peacemakers, Father. And we trust you, God. We don't know what's going to happen tomorrow. Father, we don't know what all will happen with this election, God. We don't know what's going to happen in 2021 or with COVID, Father, but we trust in you Lord. And I pray that you will give us the strength that we need, Father, that you will give us the faith that we need, that you will give us the love that we need to reach out and get to know people that are different from us.

To set the example in our personal relationships that'll send ripples throughout the different systems that we live in here in the United States of America, Father. Thank you so much for this opportunity and I pray that you will be glorified through our lives, in Jesus name we pray. Amen.

**Weston Wamp:**

That was awesome. Hey, I'm honored all of you that gave us your time. Thank you.