

F. The gospel is inclusive; it does not build walls, it builds bridges.<sup>17</sup> The promise to Abraham was for the purpose of blessing the nations.<sup>18</sup> That theme is repeated in the prophets and finds its culmination in Revelation, where all tribes, tongues, nations, and peoples come to worship God.<sup>19</sup>

G. “Blessed are the peacemakers.”<sup>20</sup>

H. The incarnation means good news for the poor, freedom for prisoners, sight for the blind, and release for the oppressed.<sup>21</sup>

Is our public witness sufficiently informed by these biblical principles? Do we take direction from God and God alone, or is our political discipleship at times compromised by idol worship, trusting something other than the God of the Bible?

At this moment in history, the Christian community suffers polarization and division, threatening the unity of the body. The coarsening of political discourse that marks our day also affects Christians. We seem to lack a common language informed by biblical principles to facilitate civil, constructive dialogue across political divides. Political discipleship should be a testimony to the redeeming, reconciling power of the gospel. To overcome political divisions, minister to each other, and have a more effective political public witness requires that biblical principles shape our talk and walk as citizens. Christian discipleship includes political discipleship. “We are to obey God in politics.”<sup>22</sup> This overture aims to focus the denomination not on political leaders and partisan agendas but on God’s Word.

## II. Overture

Classis B.C. South-East overtures Synod 2018 to do the following:

A. Encourage the denomination, its officers, boards, agencies, publications, and local congregations to foster discussion and education focused on the biblical principles for public discipleship, including those enumerated in the Preamble of this overture.

B. Instruct the executive director of the CRCNA to monitor progress made and report to Synod 2019.

### *Grounds:*

1. While it is not the task of the pulpit to tell the pew how to fill in the ballot, the Bible’s view of the task of government must shape how we vote, talk about, and participate in the public life of our nations.

<sup>17</sup> Matt. 28:18-20; Gal. 3:26-29

<sup>18</sup> Gen. 12:3;

<sup>19</sup> Isa. 42:6; 49:6; Rev. 21: 24-26

<sup>20</sup> Matt. 5:9

<sup>21</sup> Luke 4:17-21

<sup>22</sup> *Our World Belongs to God* (1986), para. 53