

# Forsyth County Commissioners:

**We urge you to stand firm for  
religious liberty!**

**WE WILL STAND WITH YOU!**

On March 29, 2007, the American Civil Liberties Union and Americans United for the Separation of Church and State filed suit against Forsyth County for allowing its Commissioners' board meetings to be opened with sectarian prayer. We urge the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners to adopt a prayer policy that carefully protects the right of ALL our citizens to pray—or not—freely and without restriction in accordance with the dictates of their own conscience and beliefs and to defend that right in court.

The Supreme Court has both ruled that invocations *are* constitutional—so long as they neither proselytize or disparage a particular faith nor demonstrate a preference for or advance one faith over another—and warned legislatures and lower courts not to become embroiled in regulating the content of such prayers! Therefore, we urge the Commissioners to adopt a policy that:

Allows an invocation to be offered for the benefit of the Board before their meetings in order to solemnize proceedings

Selects from a wide pool of all recognized clergy (on a rotating basis) to voluntarily deliver these prayers (without compensation), making every effort to ensure that any/all faiths are represented

Does *not* list or recognize such prayer as an agenda item or part of the public business

Does not require any member or person in attendance to participate in such prayer

Does not regulate, review, or involve the Board with content of prayers in any way

For a free and diverse society to flourish, religious speech must never be muzzled but always be respected and protected. We implore our elected officials to stand firmly in protecting the religious liberties of ALL our citizens!

We ask our Commissioners to join us in striving to preserve the intent of the Constitution itself: to be inclusive of all, exclusive of none. We urge them to defend the freedom of ALL Americans to pray—or to keep silent—in accordance with the dictates of their consciences and the teaching and tradition of their faith.

Whether Moravian or Muslim, Baptist or Baha'i, Jewish or Jehovah's Witness, Unitarian or United Methodist—let us ALL pray!