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Attorneys for Plaintiffs

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

FAITH CENTER CHURCH
EVANGELISTIC MINISTRIES, et al.,

Plaintiffs,
v.

FEDERAL D. GLOVER, et al.,

Defendants.

CASE NO. C-04-3111 JSW

**DECLARATION OF DR. HATTIE M.
HOPKINS IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS’
MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT**

1 I, Dr. Hattie M. Hopkins, declare as follows:

2 1. I am the leader of Faith Center Evangelistic Ministries (“Faith Center”) and a
3 plaintiff in the above-captioned matter. If called as a witness, I could and would testify
4 competently to the truth of the matters set forth in this declaration. I make this declaration based
5 on my personal knowledge.

6 2. As a Christian, I am instructed by the Bible to communicate my religious beliefs
7 with others, and to help equip others to overcome the many challenges that they face in their
8 lives.

9 3. I believe that there are many individuals who would benefit from learning about
10 Christianity and the Bible, but who may be unwilling to set foot inside a church building. So I
11 hold Faith Center’s meetings in buildings other than traditional church buildings.

12 4. These meetings typically include what I call a time of “praise and worship.” As I
13 use the phrase, “praise and worship” includes discussions about the Bible, teaching, sermons,
14 singing, praying, sharing testimonies, taking communion, and other similar activities. The time
15 of praise and worship is an opportunity for people to gather together to acknowledge the
16 existence of God and to collectively express their love for Him. All “praise and worship”
17 involves teaching about who God is and helping us to develop our moral character so that it is
18 consistent with what the Bible teaches. Specifically, I try to emphasize Biblical directives about
19 moral character, like loving God and our neighbors, helping the weak and poor among us, and
20 leading productive lives as responsible citizens.

21 5. To this end, I generally preach a sermon as part of Faith Center’s “praise and
22 worship” time. My sermons take principles from the Bible and communicate them in a way that
23 anyone can apply them to their life. My sermons cover topics like: developing strong character;
24 developing good self-esteem by understanding how God sees us; overcoming addictions and
25 harmful habits; learning to forgive; knowing how to have a good relationship with God and
26 others; having patience; learning to rely on God to provide for all of our needs; learning how to
27 deal with rejection; and overcoming fear, anxiety, and depression. I always try to have the songs,
28 prayers, testimonies, and other activities making up the time of praise and worship compliment

1 and build upon the lessons in my sermon.

2 6. This time of “praise and worship” is not the only time that I, or Faith Center as a
3 group, engage in worship. I understand worship to be an outward expression of a relationship
4 with God. I believe that God is intimately involved in every aspect of my life. And any time I am
5 doing something that is in accordance with what God would like me to do, that is an act of
6 worship. So I try to be continually in worship.

7 7. As a result, it is impossible for me to distinguish between worship and any other
8 aspect of Faith Center’s meetings. I use the phrase “praise and worship” based on my own
9 personal and theological understanding of those terms, and other people may define those terms
10 much differently.

11 8. On May 29, 2004, Faith Center sponsored a “Women of Excellence Conference,”
12 which was held in the Antioch Library meeting room. The Conference was divided into four
13 parts: (1) registration from 10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.; (2) a “Wordshop” from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00
14 p.m.; (3) refreshments from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.; and (4) a time of “Praise and Worship” with
15 a sermon from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

16 9. The topic of the Wordshop was “The Making of an Intercessor.” Using lessons
17 from the Bible, the Wordshop explained the need for all Christians to pray, and it gave
18 instruction on how to pray fervent, effectual prayers that God hears and answers.

19 10. The “praise and worship” session consisted of several elements. We opened with
20 a group prayer. This prayer served several purposes. It helped the group to come back together
21 following the time of refreshments and prepare them mentally and spiritually to learn more from
22 the Bible. It also provided a model to those attending the conference what the Wordshop taught
23 about effectively communicating with God. Finally, it provided the conference, as a group, the
24 chance to acknowledge personal and community struggles that were affecting those in attendance
25 and ask for God to show us how to remove those struggles and heal the community. Praying in
26 this way helps to communicate to others that they are not alone in trying to overcome whatever
27 problems they are faced with.

28 11. Following the opening prayer, we sang a song together as a group entitled “When

1 I See Jesus.” The lyrics of the song are as follows:

3 When I see Jesus, I’ll say “Amen”

4 When I see Jesus, say “Amen”

5 When I see Jesus, “Amen”

6 Hallelujah, Anyhow

7 I won’t let my troubles get me down

8 I don’t care what comes my way

9 Hold my head up high and say

10 Hallelujah, Anyhow.

11 12. I chose this song to help communicate to the conference attendees that, in Jesus,
12 they can find the strength to face difficult situations that may otherwise be impossible to get
13 through. This is directly related to the earlier teachings about prayer because prayer is the way
14 that we can directly connect with Jesus. This song helps show that developing a strong
15 relationship with Jesus through prayer provides hope, encouragement, and strength, even when
16 we are going through difficult times personally or in our community.

17 13. After we sang “When I See Jesus,” I invited a friend, Carol Stone, to sing a solo
18 of the song “Amazing Grace.” The lyrics of “Amazing Grace” are, in part, as follows:

20 Amazing grace, how sweet the sound

21 That saved a wretch like me!

22 I once was lost, but now am found,

23 Was blind, but now I see.

25 ‘Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,

26 And grace my fears relieved;

27 How precious did that grace appear,

28 The hour I first believed.

1
2 Through many dangers, toils and snares,
3 I have already come;
4 'Tis grace has brought be safe thus far,
5 And grace will lead me home.

6 14. Like the previous song, I chose “Amazing Grace” to reinforce what was taught at
7 the Wordshop. It is very common for people to feel uncomfortable with prayer because they
8 believe that they have made too many mistakes in their lives that God will not listen to them. But
9 this song teaches that God accepts us and loves us unconditionally, and that He will help us to
10 overcome whatever problems we are facing. This song helps affirm that everyone, regardless of
11 their past, can effectively communicate with God.

12 15. Following “Amazing Grace,” I gave a sermon entitled “Position Yourself for
13 Victory.” My sermon was based on 2 Chronicles 20, which tells the story of Jehoshaphat, the
14 King of Judah, who prayed to God for protection when Judah was being invaded by groups from
15 other lands. God answered his prayer and protected Judah from invasion.

16 16. My sermon was designed to reinforce what was taught during the morning
17 Wordshop. Jehoshaphat’s story shows the power of prayer. My sermon explained that if we want
18 to positions ourselves for victory and overcome the problems in our lives and in our
19 communities, we have to be able to effectively communicate with God. This requires us to first
20 know who God is and have a relationship with Him. Then we must develop the moral character
21 to avoid being self-centered, to love others as ourselves, and to be willing to seek God on their
22 behalf. Then we can learn to effectively communicate with God through prayer. And only then
23 can we overcome the personal and societal problems we are all affected by.

24 17. The afternoon session concluded with a closing group prayer. Much like the
25 opening prayer, it provided a model to those attending the conference of what the Wordshop
26 taught about effectively communicating with God. It also encouraged the attendees to continue
27 applying the principles that they had learned after the conference was over. And we again prayed
28 for personal and community problems that were affecting the group.

1 18. At the end of this conference, I was informed by two Antioch Library employees,
2 Jenna Biglow and Lisa Loomis, that groups were not permitted to use the meeting room for
3 religious purposes.

4 19. I asked if the reason for the prohibition was because of excessive noise from the
5 Faith Center meeting. The Library employees said that there was no noise problem with Faith
6 Center—the only problem was that Faith Center was conducting a religious meeting.

7 20. After the District Court granted my motion for a preliminary injunction, Faith
8 Center held several additional meetings at the Antioch Library meeting room.

9 21. I have never been told by a Library employee that any of those meetings created
10 any excessive noise or that people could hear us outside of the meeting room.

11 22. I also discovered that more people were able to attend Faith Center’s meetings at
12 the Library if I scheduled them for Saturday evenings starting at 6:00 P.M., which is after the
13 Library has already closed.

14 23. I would like to reserve the Antioch Library meeting room for future Faith Center
15 meetings, and I expect to continue to have them on Saturday evenings after the Library has
16 closed.

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1 I declare under the penalty of perjury, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, that the foregoing is
2 true and correct.

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4 Executed this 5TH day of September, 2008 in SACRAMENTO, California.

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6 By: 
7 HATTIE M. HOPKINS
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