



THE HISTORIC
CALVARY
BAPTIST CHURCH
OF DOVER, DELAWARE

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The Place Where Life Begins

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I have not been quick to respond to the recently depicted image of the President in the likeness of Jesus Christ, and his public rhetoric directed toward Pope Leo XIV, which has caused a firestorm.

However, I do feel compelled to offer this response with clarity, conviction, and pastoral responsibility.

My concern is not just political; it is profoundly theological. We believe that Jesus Christ is the unique and unrepeatable revelation of God. The Incarnation (God in flesh) is the central mystery of our faith. To depict – or claim – that space, regardless of status, influence, or office, for yourself is a very dangerous blurring of the lines of what the Church holds as sacred. Christ alone bears the weight of redemption. Christ alone mediates between God and humanity. Christ alone is Lord. And for those of us who believe in the laying on of hands and the miraculous healing of the sick, even in that space, we are just conduits – the vessels through which God chooses to work. We are NOT Christ, but we serve and are available to be used BY Christ.

When sacred imagery is co-opted, even in jest or exaggeration, it risks distorting the theological imagination of the faithful. It subtly suggests that power can be redemptive, that leadership can be salvific, or that influence can substitute for incarnation. The Church must never accept this – not even as a joke.

At the same time, the tone and substance of public attacks directed toward Pope Leo XIV were unacceptable. Our traditions and theological convictions differ, but the place from which the Pope spoke is the same place from which we all who have been called to pastoral responsibility should speak – from the Word of God. The Pope has a responsibility to those assigned to him, just as we who are called to this ministry have a responsibility to those assigned to our charge. To have our responsibility spoken of with contempt, or to weaponize it for public spectacle, is unacceptable – whether you agree or not. We are not required to agree on all things, but we are required to honor the sacred where it stands. Whenever our hope becomes entangled with human power, our discipleship is at risk of distortion.

We have to reaffirm our Christology – Christ ALONE is Lord and King. No leader redeems. No administration saves. No political party can transform the human soul. The Church must refuse to be silent where truth is at stake. I offer this not as a partisan response, but as a pastoral one. The Church's voice is most faithful when it speaks not from reaction, but from revelation. And what has been revealed to us in Christ cannot be revised by culture.

Faithfully in His service and with pastoral love,



