

# FREEDOM FROM RELIGION *foundation*

P.O. BOX 750 › MADISON, WI 53701 › (608) 256-8900 › WWW.FFRF.ORG

December 14, 2022

**SENT VIA EMAIL:**

**eoclass@irs.gov**

Internal Revenue Service  
1111 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20224

Re: Life-Changing Faith Christian Fellowship Electioneering

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) to report concerns of potential illegal political campaigning by Life-Changing Faith Christian Fellowship, located at 7185 W Main St, Frisco, TX 75034. FFRF is a national nonprofit organization with more than 39,000 members across the country. Our purposes are to protect the constitutional principle of separation between state and church, and to educate the public on matters relating to nontheism.

According to a November 2022 report published by ProPublica and the Texas Tribune, Life-Changing Faith Christian Fellowship Senior Pastor Dono Pelham endorsed his wife, Angelia Pelham, as a candidate for Frisco City Council on May 2, 2021, by informing his congregation during his sermon that she had qualified as a candidate in the upcoming runoff election, and then encouraged them to vote in that election, saying: “I’m not about to endorse, but you’ll get the message.”<sup>1</sup>

The Internal Revenue Code states that to retain their 501(c)(3) status an organization cannot “participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.”<sup>2</sup> Though Pastor Pelham claimed he was not endorsing a candidate, by identifying Angelia Pelham as a candidate and simultaneously encouraging his congregation to vote, he is clearly intervening on her behalf. Pastor Pelham in his role as the Senior Pastor of 501(c)(3) organization Life-Changing Faith Christian Fellowship breached the responsibilities that come with his church’s tax exempt status.

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<sup>1</sup> Jessica Priest & Jeremy Schwartz, *These 20 Churches Supported Political Candidates. Experts Say they Violated Federal Law.*, ProPublica and the Texas Tribune (November 7, 2022), available at: <https://www.texastribune.org/2022/11/07/churches-list-violations-johnson-amendment/>.

<sup>2</sup> I.R.C. Sec. 501(c)(3)

Life-Changing Christian Fellowship appears to have improperly used its status as a religious organization and 501(c)(3) entity to intervene in political campaigning. Pastor Pelham violated IRS regulations by endorsing Angelia Pelham, displaying a clear preference for one candidate over others.

We write to respectfully request that the IRS immediately investigate Life-Changing Faith Christian Fellowship, and ensure that it is no longer receiving the benefits of 501(c)(3) status and that donations made to the church are no longer being treated as tax deductible. The IRS should take appropriate action to remedy any violations of 501(c)(3) regulations that occurred or which continue to occur.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kat D. Grant". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kat D. Grant

*Equal Justice Works Fellow (sponsored by the Wm. Collins Kohler Foundation)*

*Freedom From Religion Foundation*