

5 Things Every Christian Needs to Know About Hillary Clinton

As she embarks, again, on a presidential campaign, one facet of Hillary Clinton, 67, is unchanged across her decades as a lawyer, first lady, senator and secretary of state: She was, is and likely always will be a social-justice-focused Methodist.

1) She was shaped by a saying popular among Methodists: “Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can,” says Paul Kengor in his book *God and Hillary Clinton*.

As a girl, she was part of the guild that cleaned the altar at First United Methodist Church in Park Ridge, Illinois. As a teen, she visited inner-city Chicago churches with the youth pastor, Don Jones, her spiritual mentor until his death in 2009. During her husband’s presidency, the first family worshipped at Washington’s Foundry United Methodist Church, and Time magazine described her membership in a bipartisan women’s prayer group organized by evangelicals.

2) Clinton’s been known to carry a Bible in her purse but, she told the 2007 CNN Faith Forum, “advertising” her faith “doesn’t come naturally to me.” Every vote Clinton made as a senator from New York, she said, was “a moral responsibility.” When asked at the forum why she thought God allows suffering, Clinton demurred on theology, then swiftly turned her answer to activism: “The existence of suffering calls us to action.”

In a 1993 speech at the University of Texas, Clinton declared: “We need a new politics of meaning. ... We have to summon up what we believe is morally and ethically and spiritually

correct and do the best we can with God's guidance." A month later, she was pictured as a saint in a Sunday New York Times Magazine exploration of that "politics of meaning" phrase.

3) Prayer matters. Clinton joked at the Faith Forum that sometimes her plea is, "Oh, Lord, why can't you help me lose weight?" But her daily habit, she said, is praying, "for discernment, for wisdom, for strength, for courage"

What she calls "grace notes" matter, too. She described them to adviser Burns Strider as "a gift that is undeserved but bestowed by the everyday joys, beauties, kindnesses, pleasures of life that can strike a deep chord of connection between us and the divine and between us and the mundane."

4) God politics gets tough. In 2008, Clinton battered then-Sen. Barack Obama for saying economically hard-pressed Americans were bitter and "cling to guns or religion." At the CNN Compassion Forum, Clinton said the Democratic Party "has been viewed as a party that didn't understand the values and way of life of so many Americans. ... It's important that we make clear that we believe people are people of faith because it is part of their whole being. It is what gives them meaning in life."

5) Last April, Clinton told the annual United Methodist Women Assembly that their shared faith has guided her to be "an advocate for children and families, for women and men around the world who are oppressed and persecuted, denied their human rights and human dignity."

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