

When Christianity Officially Becomes Hate Speech

A Montana pastor who also works part-time as a realtor is suing a realty trade organization over the claim he is being wrongfully accused of violating the group's hate speech policy.

Brandon Huber, pastor of Clinton Community Church, filed suit against the Missoula Organization of Realtors earlier this month over allegations made to the organization that he violated its hate speech policy.

Huber has been a member of the group since August 2020, according to *The Missoulian*.

But the story actually has nothing to do with real estate. In fact, it apparently centers on Huber's decision to halt a church partnership with the Missoula Food Bank—an organization providing food to those in need—over the purported decision to include LGBTQ-themed inserts in its “Kids Eat Free” lunches.

The Clinton Community Church took part in the food effort for a number of years, but when the inserts with messages about “pride” and “love is love” were purportedly slipped into the lunches, Huber pulled the church out of the program.

He and his house of worship said these printed materials went against their “biblical doctrine,” and the congregation instead handed out 680 lunches on its own.

The pastor penned a letter to congregants in July and the church also posted its reasoning on a Facebook community group. Here's a portion of that letter, as per KTVH-TV:

“Clinton Community Church wants our community to know that we love and support each and every one of you, no matter your

background or where you are in life,” Huber’s letter said. “As a church, we strive to show the love of Jesus in all we do throughout this community, while standing up for biblical principles, biblical truths and our beliefs.”

One might assume the story would end there, but it was just the beginning. After the church explained its decision, someone filed an ethics complaint with the Missoula Organization of Realtors alleging Huber—again, a part-time realtor—is biased against the LGBTQ community, the Missoulain reported.

The basis of the violation appears to be a hate speech provision in the National Association of Realtors (NAR) ethics code, to which the Missoula chapter subscribes. A Nov. 13, 2020, press release on the NAR website explains the intent of the new personal conduct policy adapted by the national body last year. {eo2}

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