

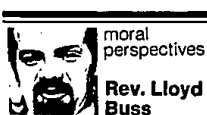
# After election, what will the winners do?

**T**HE election is over. We know the winners. But do we know what they are going to do as our elected representatives? That depends. It depends on how much we plan to participate in the ordering of public life.

The political campaign 1988 style was a great disappointment and bodes grievous times. Getting elected has always been a goal for seekers of public office, but never in village memory has it been with such disdain for the maladies of public life that need our urgent and careful attention.

**BEFORE WE** chastise the contestants, however, we need to examine and remember our demands upon their presence.

Contestants for public office keep



**Rev. Lloyd Buss**  
moral perspectives

a most watchful eye on the interests of the voting public. Opinion polls, nightly newscasts, crowd size and responses, financial support et al are all weighty factors in creating speech rhetoric and one-line slogans. Contestants for public office, 1988 style, told us what we wanted to hear. They were more interested in establishing a public consensus than in creating a public conscience.

**THIS IS** not the first time, nor will it be the last.

(Jeremiah 6:14)

Joshiah and the people of Judah had ignored Jeremiah's prophetic words as wind, but the wind would return as the consuming word of God.

Does all this suggest that the political campaign 1988 style did not include the important issues of our public life? Of course not.

Opinion polls, nightly newscasts, campaign speech rhetoric and one-line slogans et al covered taxes, the national deficit, jobs, foreign trade, crime and punishment, national defense and nuclear disarmament, as well as abortion, waving flags and praying in public schools. What we wanted was a 30-second

analysis, resolution and candidate guarantee. It is entirely possible that that is exactly what the political campaign 1988 style has produced.

Unfortunately for our time, and even more unfortunately for the times to come, that will not serve us well as we move forward into an ever changing world.

**PREOCCUPIED** as we have been with electing our candidates, even as our candidates have been preoccupied with being elected, we have left untouched the soul-wrestling experience of affirming and establishing fundamental justice and truth in our times of great change. Political candidates only promote

what they believe the public desires. Political candidates, turned into political officeholders, will be equally anxious to meet the expectations of their constituency.

The political campaign 1988 style is over . . . at last. Now the real work for the American public has begun — at least if the American public intends to meet the demands and opportunities of these times with spirit and resolve that created this nation and time in which we live and hope.

The Rev. Lloyd Buss is pastor of Abiding Presence Lutheran Church in Rochester Hills.

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