

TUESDAY JANUARY 8, 2013

MAYOR TAB TOWNSELL AND THE DISTINGUISHED MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVE AS THE CONWAY CITY COUNCIL, MY NAME IS PHILLIP D. FLETCHER AND I AM CITIZEN OF THIS CITY. IN MY CAPACITY AS A CITIZEN OF THIS CITY, I AM A CHRISTIAN FIRST AND FROM THAT I AM A HUSBAND, FATHER, PASTOR AND NON-PROFIT DIRECTOR. I WANT TO CONGRATULATE THOSE WHO HAVE SECURED A SEAT ON THE CITY COUNCIL AND I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE CONTINUING TO SERVE IN YOUR SEAT TO FULFILL YOUR TERM.

YOURS IS A WEIGHTY TASK. YOUR POSITION AS MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS IS NOT SOME WORK THAT IS TO BE TAKEN LIGHTLY AS YOU ARE GOVERNING AUTHORITIES WHO HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED BY GOD. LONG BEFORE YOU ENTERED THIS CHAMBER AND RECITED AN OATH TO BE FAITHFUL TO YOUR OFFICE. LONG BEFORE YOU SAT DOWN TODAY. LONG BEFORE YOU DETERMINED TO CAST YOUR HAT INTO THE RING TO RUN FOR OFFICE, GOD WHO IS THE CREATOR AND SOVEREIGN OF OUR CITY, STATE, NATION, WORLD AND UNIVERSE, ORDAINED THAT YOU WOULD BE HERE TODAY.

I NEED FOR YOU TO UNDERSTAND TONIGHT THAT NOT ONLY ARE YOU ORDAINED BY GOD TO SERVE AS THE CITY'S GOVERNING AUTHORITIES BUT YOU MEN AND WOMEN ARE ALSO GOD'S SERVANT FOR OUR GOOD. YOUR TASK IS WEIGHTY BECAUSE IT WAS NOT MAN ALONE WHO GAVE YOUR AUTHORITY THROUGH THE BALLOT BOX AND IT WAS NOT SIMPLY YOUR ABILITY TO PERSUADE MEN AND WOMEN TO VOTE FOR YOU. NO, LADIES AND GENTLEMAN, YOU SERVE IN YOUR SEAT AT THE BEHEST AND PRIVILEGE OF GOD.

IT IS NEEDFUL OF ME TO REMIND YOU OF THIS BECAUSE FIRST AND FOREMOST I LOVE YOUR SOULS. YOU MAY NOT KNOW ME AND I MAY NOT KNOW YOU, BUT BY VIRTUE OF THE FACT THAT WE ALL HERE ARE MEN AND WOMEN MADE IN THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF GOD, IT IS MY DUTY TO COME TO YOU TONIGHT AND EXHORT YOU. SECONDLY, I SPEAK THESE WORDS TO YOU BECAUSE SOME OF YOU MAY HAVE FORGOTTEN THAT YOUR POSITION IS ORDAINED BY GOD OR SOME OF YOU MAY NEVER HAD HEARD THESE SIMPLE TRUTHS. THEREFORE MY WORDS TONIGHT SPRING FROM A FOUNTAIN OF LOVE THAT CALLS ME TO PRAY, HONOR, ENCOURAGE AND WARN ALL OF YOU. MY WORDS ARE TO YOU MEN AND WOMEN WHO SIT AT THE GATES OF THE CITY AND DELIBERATE HOW BEST TO SERVE OUR CITY AND ULTIMATELY CREATE A CITY UPON WHICH GOD'S FACE SMILES.

OUR CITY IS AN EXPANDING CITY. SHE IS GROWING IN SCHOOLS AND IN NEW TYPES OF INDUSTRIES. OUR CITY IS AN IMPROVING CITY AS SHE IS BUILDING A NEW AIRPORT, SLOWLY IMPROVING ROADS AND CREATING NEW VILLAGES. THESE EXPANSIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS ARE ALL TO BE CELEBRATED. THEY SPEAK TO THE IMAGINATION AND VIBRANCY OF A PEOPLE THAT ARE DESIROUS TO IMPROVE THEIR LIVES.

YET OUR CITY CAN NOT BE KNOWN SIMPLY FOR NEW CONSTRUCTIONS, IMPROVING TRANSPORTATION AND GROWING SCHOOLS. WHAT WILL MAKE OUR CITY GREAT AND WILL BE THE LEGACY OF YOU MEN AND WOMEN IS HOW WE WILL CARE FOR THE FAMILIES OF OUR CITY. AND SO I WOULD STRONGLY ENCOURAGE YOU TO REMEMBER THE DIVERSE FAMILIES OF OUR CITY. I WOULD STRONGLY

ENCOURAGE YOU TO PAUSE AND LISTEN TO NOT ONLY THE LAUGHS BUT ALSO THE CRIES THAT GO UP OUT OF OUR CITY.

PLEASE HEAR THE CRIES OF THAT FAMILY ON PINE STREET WHO HAS AS A GREAT DESIRE FOR SAFETY AS THE FAMILY IN WEST CONWAY.

PLEASE HEAR THE CRIES OF THAT FAMILY IN OAKWOOD WHO HAS TO WALK THE BEATEN PATHS OF HARKRIDER WITH NO SIDEWALK JUST TO ARRIVE AT THE GROCERY STORE WHEN OTHER AREAS OF OUR CITY CONTINUE TO RECEIVE SAFE WALKING AREAS AND BIKE TRAILS.

PLEASE HEAR THE CRIES OF THE HOMELESS THAT LIVE IN THE HIDDEN BUSHES BEHIND GROCERY STORES AND GAS STATIONS AS OTHER AREAS OF OUR CITY RECEIVE IMPROVED HOUSING.

THESE ARE SOME OF THE CRIES THAT GO UP OUT OF OUR DIVERSE CITY. THEY ARE THE CRIES AND LAUGHS OF MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN THAT YOU ALL REPRESENT. THESE ARE THE FAMILIES THAT YOU HAVE RAISED YOUR RIGHT HAND TO SAY, "I WILL REPRESENT YOU!"

SO WHAT DO I REQUIRE OF YOU? WHAT DO THE CITIZENS OF CONWAY REQUIRE OF YOU? BUT MORE THAN THAT, WHAT DOES GOD REQUIRE OF YOU?

"HE HAS TOLD YOU, O MAN AND WOMAN WHAT IS GOOD...BUT TO DO JUSTICE, AND TO LOVE KINDNESS AND TO WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD."

MR. MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL YOU HAVE THE GREAT AND ETERNAL PRIVILEGE TO SERVE AS THE SERVANTS OF GOD TO BE SERVANT TO THE PEOPLE OF CONWAY. YOU ARE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LIVING GOD WHO CREATED HEAVEN AND EARTH, WHO APPEARED IN JESUS CHRIST AND HE WHO NOW RULES AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. THIS GOD HAS CALLED EACH OF YOU IN 2013 TO SERVE HIS PEOPLE IN DOING JUSTICE, LOVING KINDNESS AND WALKING WITH GOD.

DO JUSTICE. LOOK UPON A MATTER, WEIGH IT CAREFULLY AND WITHOUT OUTSIDE PERSUASION OR BRIBE, CARRY OUT YOUR DUTIES IN A MANNER THAT ARE A REFLECTION OF THE GOD WHO HAS MADE YOU MAYOR AND A CITY COUNCILMAN.

LOVE MERCY. I PRAY THAT YOUR HEARTS WOULD BE OVERFLOWING WITH A MERCY THAT RELIEVES THE PEOPLE OF OUR CITY OF CRIME, BURDENSOME TAXES AND SENSELESS REGULATIONS.

FINALLY, WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD. I PRAY THAT YOU'RE LIVES, THE LIVES OF YOUR FAMILY, WHERE YOU WORK AND HOW YOU GOVERN IN THIS CHAMBER WOULD BE CHARACTERIZED BY A HUMILITY THAT DEMONSTRATES THE PRESENCE OF GOD. THEREFORE, HEAR THE VOICE OF YOUR PEOPLE. RESPOND TO THEIR CONCERNS. ANSWER THEIR CALLS AND DEMONSTRATE TO OUR CITY THAT OUR VOICE IS TRULY BEING HEARD.

MR. MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL, I HAVE HOPE AND THAT HOPE IS IN GOD. MY HOPE THAT EACH OF YOU WILL CARRY OUT YOUR DUTIES IS ROOTED, IT IS GROUNDED IN THE GOD OF HOPE WHO SAID; "THIS ONE WILL SERVE THIS CITY." I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU MEN AND WOMEN SERVE FAITHFULLY,

POWERFULLY AND HUMBLY. SO, MAY THE GOD OF HOPE FILL YOU WITH ALL JOY AND PEACE IN BELIEVING, SO THAT BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT YOU (TO) MAY ABOUND IN HOPE!

MAY THE GOD OF PEACE BE WITH YOU ALL AND OUR CITY.