



Triangle Freethought Society
a chapter of the Freedom from Religion Foundation, Inc

Monday May 3, 2010
Press Release
For Immediate Release

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Triangle Freethought Society to promote National Day of Reason

The Triangle Freethought Society (TFS) will hold a vigil at Noon on May, 6th facing the NC State Capitol building to promote the National Day of Reason. This will be in contrast to the National Day of Prayer event scheduled for the same time on the Capital grounds.

Raleigh, NC, May 3, 2010 - TFS will raise awareness about the National Day of Reason, as well as protest the unconstitutionality of the National Day of Prayer via a vigil on Thursday, May 6th at 12:00 Noon across from the NC State Capitol (on E. Edenton Street). TFS members and supporters will hold signs and distribute literature intended to educate North Carolinians about the National Day of Reason.

TFS will also use the opportunity to inform North Carolinians that on April 15, 2010 there was a U.S. District court ruling that the National Day of Prayer is an unconstitutional violation of the separation of church and state.

On that date, U.S. Court Judge Barbara B. Crabb wrote of the 1952 statute creating the National Day of Prayer that its "sole purpose is to encourage all citizens to engage in prayer, an inherently religious exercise that serves no secular function."

"The purpose of our gathering and of the National Day of Reason is to celebrate reason," says TFS President, Mark Zumbach. "Reason is a concept all Americans can support."

Zumbach continues, "We want to raise public awareness about the persistent threat to religious liberty posed by government intrusion into the private sphere of worship."

"This year Federal and State time, money, and resources will be dedicated to the National Day of Prayer" says Zumbach. "And we feel attention should be shifted to issues that are the business of the Federal and State governments."

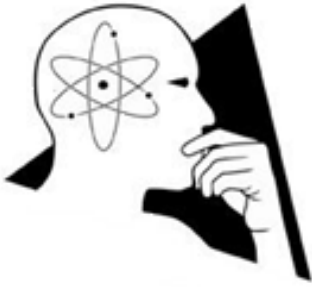
"No one is trying to stop people from praying," says Alex Jones, a TFS Member who will participate in the vigil. "People are free to pray and organize their own private day of prayer, but asking the government to become involved excludes Americans who don't pray."

Mr. Jones adds, "The National Day of Prayer is clearly a violation of the First Amendment."

The focus of the TFS vigil will be on the following points:

- The government should not be telling anyone when and how to express their religion. We should all pray (or not pray) as we choose. The government should not dictate this to anyone. Christians and non-Christians should be offended by the National Day of Prayer.
- TFS supports the right of Christian citizens to organize a day of prayer, but oppose the government endorsing such a day at the exclusion of the approximate 18% of North Carolinians that do not identify themselves as Christians. ¹

(more)



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- The National Day of Prayer was recently found to be unconstitutional by a federal district court, ruling that it does infringe on the freedoms of America's citizens. The Day of Prayer is just as illegal as if the government were to "encourage citizens to fast during the month of Ramadan, attend a synagogue, purify themselves in a sweat lodge or practice rune magic." ²

"It is a weak religion that needs a government edict to encourage worship," said Buddy Owens, another TFS member, "I don't need the Pharaoh to tell me when to pray."

¹ American Religious Identification Survey for 2008. Barry A. Kosmin and Ariela Keysar, Trinity College in Hartford CT

² United States District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin, Opinion and order 08-cv-588-bbc, U.S. District Judge Barbara Crabb

About the Triangle Freethought Society (TFS)

TFS was founded and incorporated in North Carolina in the autumn of 2009. It was officially voted in as a chapter of the Freedom from Religion Foundation, Inc. during their annual meeting in November, 2009. TFS is a group of humanists, atheists, post-theists, non-theists agnostics, freethinkers and skeptics in the Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill areas of North Carolina.

The purpose of TFS is to protect the separation of church and state as guaranteed by the First Amendment to the constitution of the United States and to educate the public on matters relating to non-theism. TFS is working for the rights of atheists and agnostics to ensure that they enjoy the same rights as religious citizens, and is working to correct the distorted image of atheists and agnostics that has been perpetrated in mainstream culture. TFS defends science education from pseudo-science, and promotes reason and compassion as an alternative to unquestioning faith in supernatural deities.

About the Freedom from Religion Foundation, Inc.

The Freedom from Religion Foundation, Inc. is an educational group working for the separation of state and church. Its purposes, as stated in its bylaws, are to promote the constitutional principle of separation of state and church, and to educate the public on matters relating to nontheism.

Incorporated in 1978 in Wisconsin, the Foundation is a national membership association of freethinkers: atheists, agnostics and skeptics of any pedigree. The Foundation is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization under Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(3). All dues and contributions are deductible for income tax purposes.

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