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Contact: Kelly Hughes, 312-280-8126  
[kelly@dechanthughes.com](mailto:kelly@dechanthughes.com)

“...helpful, concisely written guide to help Christians through this election season....a must-read for anyone contemplating debating the issues during this election cycle, and especially those who want to do what is right without being ‘unfriended’ along the way.”— **Publishers Weekly** starred review

Followup to Theologian Miroslav Volf’s *A Public Faith*  
**New Book *Public Faith in Action* Helps Christians Draw on  
Teachings of Jesus to Vote with Integrity**

In an election year, the question of how Christians might vote is the subject of heightened interest. Renowned theologian Miroslav Volf, director of the Yale Center for Faith and Culture, and scholar Ryan McAnnally-Linz illustrate how the life and teachings of Jesus should shape Christian voters in their new book, *Public Faith in Action: How to Think Carefully, Engage Wisely, and Vote with Integrity* (Brazos Press, \$21.99 hardcover, June 21, 2016).

“The Christian faith is a public faith,” the authors contend. “Christ must be the center and norm for Christian public engagement.” Specific principles grounded in the life and message of Jesus must guide Christians in thinking about hot topics such as immigration, same-sex marriage, poverty, jobs and the minimum wage, abortion, healthcare, and torture.

By this standard, much of the debate coming out of the 2016 presidential election is missing the point. While the candidates target middle-class voters, “a political conversation that focuses almost exclusively on the wellbeing of the middle class is unacceptable,” Volf and McAnnally-Linz say. Poverty receives hardly any attention in public debates, but for Christians, there is no question that societies should care for the poor.

This is just one example of the pressing public issues addressed in the book. Others include:

- **Migration:** “Welcoming love is the first basic Christian commitment that should shape public engagement related to migration,” the authors say. “As God is welcoming and just toward all humans, so our societies ought to be welcoming and just toward migrants.”
- **Policing:** “Policing is indispensable to protect citizens from harm and create conditions for the flourishing of all. Police officers are not warriors fighting an enemy but guardians protecting communities with which they should identify. We should task the police with acting above all as protectors of the poor and underprivileged.”
- **Marriage and Family:** Marriage and family are important for raising children and nurturing covenantal commitments. The authors believe that the state should accord equal legal treatment to other-sex and same-sex marriages, and make the case that “even Christians who hold to a traditional moral evaluation of sex between people of the same sex” can support legal equality of same-sex marriage “as part of faithful public discipleship in support of the goods of marriage and the family.”

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- **Environment:** “There is no compelling case for continuing to avoid significant action on the environment,” Volf and McAnnally-Linz say. “The enduring, non-instrumental goodness of creation is the first basic Christian conviction that should shape our engagement with environmental issues.”
- **War and Torture:** “War is never—or almost never—justifiable” on a Christian basis. “All Christians must be ‘pacifist’ at least in the sense of being seekers and makers of peace.” The authors also say that Christians must never condone torture, which “erodes the moral character of the society that permits it.”
- **Borrowing and Lending:** Jesus’ teachings apply to issues such as the abusive lending practices that were at the root of the 2008 financial crisis. The authors warn about “the distortions of lending and borrowing that pervert debt from an instrument for promoting human flourishing into a source of misery and ruin.”

A nonpartisan handbook, *Public Faith in Action* presents the big-picture commitments that orient faithful Christian life, along with the virtues such as courage, humility, justice, respect and compassion that Christians ought to live out in their public lives. These convictions and values should guide Christians in their judgments—for this year’s election, and beyond.

The authors recognize that there is room for civil disagreement among Christians on some issues. They include “room for debate” questions to encourage thoughtful conversation about faithful approaches.

*Public Faith in Action* is a companion volume to Miroslav Volf’s *A Public Faith: How Followers of Christ Should Serve the Common Good* (Brazos Press, 2011).

**Miroslav Volf** (DrTheol, University of Tübingen) is the Henry B. Wright Professor of Systematic Theology at Yale Divinity School and founding director of the Yale Center for Faith and Culture in New Haven, Connecticut. He has written more than fifteen books, including *A Public Faith*, *Exclusion and Embrace* (winner of the Grawemeyer Award in Religion and selected among the one hundred best religious books of the twentieth century by *Christianity Today*), *After Our Likeness*, and *The End of Memory*.

**Ryan McAnnally-Linz** (PhD, Yale University) is an associate research scholar at the Yale Center for Faith and Culture. In addition to his scholarly writings, he has coauthored articles with Miroslav Volf for *Sojourners*, *The Christian Century*, and *The Huffington Post*. He is the cofounder of Just Apparel, a nonprofit fair-trade clothing initiative.

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*Public Faith in Action:*  
*How to Think Carefully, Engage Wisely, and Vote with Integrity*  
by Miroslav Volf and Ryan McAnnally-Linz

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