

The Bonhoeffer Forum Business Plan



June, 2023

Proposed by

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The Bonhoeffer Forum

Background

In 1920 thru the end of World War Two, a young German theologian took a stand against Adolf Hitler and his quest to conquer the German Christian Church. As a pattern developed by the action of the German Government a similar pattern is happening today. In Michigan the church was looked at as "nonessential." Michiganders were allowed to buy Marijuana, alcohol, as well as get an abortion. The Governor did not allow gatherings of people, and in some cases, people were encouraged to call police if neighbors had gatherings of individuals that exceeded the Governor's requirements.



For the first time many Americans around the country experienced a government-imposed shutdown of their church. This government overreach is not restricted to what happened during the Covid lockdowns, but other acts of governmental agencies both on the local and state level. With the current environment becoming more hostile to religious organizations and practices, the Church needs to be able to prepare and respond in ever-changing surroundings.

What is The Bonhoeffer Forum?

In 2021 Pastor Austin T Kreutz founded The Bonhoeffer Forum For Church and Culture. The first activity was a conference called "Will The Gates Of Hell Prevail?" The conference was a success, and featured Rafael Cruz, Kamal Saleem, Trevor Loudon, Pastor Cody Kuehl, and Pastor Austin T Kreutz.

During the 2022 election, Kreutz ran for Michigan State Senate. It was during this race he shared concerning issues in Michigan and how important it is for the church to stand up for basic liberties and rights. Much to his surprise many pastors refused to engage the cultural issues taking place in the state and nation.

Our mission is to present truth considering historical backgrounds to prepare an answer to current cultural and theological trends. The Bonhoeffer Forum provides the church at large with information and education on the issues confronting Michigan and the nation. By analyzing what has taken place in history, and the history of theology the church can learn how to disciple their members and prepare them to address current cultural trends.

This passion to equip the church is the driving force behind the Bonhoeffer Forum. We understand the public at large is daily confronted with an overload of information. There is an agenda with the mainstream media to censor the stories they cover and generally report from a perspective toward the left. We see our task is to bring a biblical perspective to current trends that not only inform but, give action points as well.

Our foundations are not only biblical, but bring the ethical and theological perspectives to the table. In this way Pastors and the public have a balanced perspective concerning the issues at hand. As Rush Limbaugh would say "I am equal time." This phrase of equal time is what is needed in the classroom and the church, considering the amount of ignorance the younger generations and public have concerning history and the founding of our nation.

Who is Pastor Austin T Kreutz?

I was born in Queens, New York to a middle-class family. My Parents moved the family to Stony Brook, and from there to Miller Place. I graduated from Port Jefferson High School and went on to attend Heidelberg College where I acquired a BA in music.

During my college experience I became a Christian and was active in campus ministry. My college sweetheart and I married had two sons and have enjoyed our 48 years together. In those early years I answered a call to ministry.

As a Pastor, I have seen all aspects of life from births to deaths and everything in-between. I have worked in the marketplace and in the factory. I understand what people go through to support a family. Earning a living while going through seminary I worked in the tool & die industry. Planting a church while being a student, working fulltime and writing my thesis, we successfully planted a church in Holland, Michigan. My skills of organization, management, and scholastic enterprises has given me an exceptional grasp of many subjects.

For more than forty years, I have been teaching life applications from God's word, Natural Law Theory, as well as the United States Constitution, The Bill of Rights and History. I have pastored in Michigan, Massachusetts, and New York. I have ministered in England, Kenya, and Uganda. With years of experience in the pastorate I have a unique insight to the current trends affecting the church. I serve as the Pastor of Restoration Christian Community in Allegan, Michigan.

I have spoken at conferences, college campuses, and debates concerning various issues and Christian perspectives. I have taught on the college level and have a reputation as conference speaker which can bring complex topics to a level all can understand, without dumbing down the topic. I bring thoughtful insight and guidance through biblical solutions. Currently I am finishing a book on ethics which we project will be published before the end of this year.

I am a graduate of Ashland Theological Seminary and was the director of Albany Area Biblical Counseling. Currently I serve as the Pastor at Restoration Christian Community in Allegan Michigan, where my wife and I have resided for the last fourteen years. I am a graduate of Heidelberg College and Ashland Theological Seminary and a member of the Evangelical Theological Society, the Evangelical Philosophical Society, The Thomas Torrance Fellowship and President of the Bonhoeffer Form for Church and Culture.

The Friday Report with Pastor Austin Kreutz is released Fridays with a weekly newsletter. The podcast is found on the website (atk4mi.org) and iHeart radio network. The broadcast covers issues, commentary, and interviews.

Why Bonhoeffer?

The German church conflict is a period in our not-too-distant past. Those who have lived thru the conflict have given accounts of life experiences which seemed an impossibility to us in 2020. The church is facing today an assault on several fronts. During the Covid lockdowns we experienced government impositions on the church. Disinformation and fear made many a pastor comply to

the demands of state officials. The violations of First Amendment rights were considered necessary in the shadow of "emergency" measures for the public good.

Those who stood to the unlawful tyranny were threatened with heavy fines and jail. Many were censored, some were threatened with the loss of their professional license. Others were pushed into taking a vaccine which was untested resulting in deaths and physical injuries beyond the normal standards of vaccine requirements.

The Bonhoeffer legacy is a model in many ways to the current religious crisis in America and other parts of the world. Early Bonhoeffer scholarship leaned to the theological left. As more of the narrative was gathered after the war, a balanced perspective began to right the direction of Bonhoeffer studies. The revised Bethge biography of Bonhoeffer opened the door to a deeper understanding of the man and his theology. The English translation of his complete works opened up a new dimension of Bonhoeffer studies.

Bonhoeffer's theology is aimed at the church. His early works became a foundation which blossomed in the later years. A true Christian conversion experience during his first New York stay brought more of an evangelical approach to his thought and theology. Bonhoeffer's theology is a practical theological guide for the church today.

The Need

It is no secret the American church is in a decline. An aged church has focused on the four walls while ignoring what is going on outside of the walls of the church. The concept of batten down the hatches and do not let the world in created a vacuum in our culture and politics. In the nineteen fifties it was fashionable to be part of a church. It was normal to have some type of religious expression displayed in the media. This civil religion was found in the public arena, schools, and public events.

A change took place a few decades later. It was no longer fashionable to be a Christian as a push was made to exploit a false premise of separation of church and state. Taken out of its original context the establishment Clause is used to suppress religious liberty. Few pastors take up the issues as a false understanding of how the first amendment is applied.

The result of the removal from the public square has created a society that is more attune to the cell phone than the Bible for their religious instruction. The technological society is producing a new religion void of any of the past heritage and spirituality. Spiritual ignorance is rampant in the marketplace as well as in many a church.

The Plan

While there is little acceptance in the clergy to engage in current cultural issues, there is a great hunger for information and teaching on the subjects the church refuses to address. I have heard many a young person explain the reason they left the faith was due to the reluctance of the church to answer many of the questions they have. The list includes politics, sex, homosexual issues, marriage and just about any of the issues and history that shape one's life.

The current push to establish clubs in educational institutions is a tool of propaganda on the rise, while groups of a religious nature are suppressed. The media is producing more products of a satanic and supernatural nature in film and video games. There is a great need to reach the thirteen- to twenty-five-year-old.

Our plan is simple. We want to provide forums and educational events concerning issues and present them from the perspective of a Biblical Worldview. Such events will be captured on video and available from our website and other formats. The presenters will have a high level of expertise in their field.

A typical format may be as follows:

- An evening event or a whole day event.
- Topics which are current.
- Experts that may not agree with each other but are respectful to engage from different perspectives.
- A time of Q&A from the audience.
- Final summary

Education

Develop curriculum which may be used in the public, home school, and private school systems. Such curriculum may also be used in the church, small groups and offered online in live zoom type environments.

Topics may include things such as Biblical worldview, Bible survey, Theology, Ethics, What is woke? Church History, American Government and Constitution. The list is endless.

Pastoral Outreach

I believe that every pastor's education does not end at seminary or Bible College. Pastors need to know what the current direction of Theology, culture, and Biblical scholarship is. We will offer pastors summits and other continuing education gatherings. In addition to educational opportunities, we will also provide speakers on a variety of subjects that maybe used in the local church.

Conferences

At least once a year we will conduct a major conference. They may center around on one topic or several interrelated topics. I would hope to have a "Conference on the Ministry" that will minister to pastors and focus on ministry and pastoral needs.

Publications

It is our intent to open a publishing house that print or digitally produce, Books, Position Papers, Newsletters, and other materials.

Finances

All the above takes money and financial investment. I am proposing a three-stage growth. Monies can be broken down in each stage as follows:

- Salaries
- Equipment
- Program Needs
- Research

Phase One	Cost	Phase Two	Cost	Phase Three	Cost
Salaries	\$30,000.00		\$70,000.00		\$100,000.00
Equipment	\$10,000.00		\$20,000.00		\$20,000.00
Programs	\$15,000.00		\$40,000.00		\$60,000.00
Research	\$4,000.00		\$6,000.00		\$6,000.00
Totals	\$59,000.00		\$136,000.00		\$186,000.00

Phase one

The initial start will establish a baseline to begin the forum. Salaries will be supplemental and used to hire help for projects. Equipment costs are for computers and projectors/large monitors. Program cost are for hall rentals and speaker's expenses and honorariums. Research is for books and materials needed for projects.

Phase Two and Three

Phase Two will include additional staff and their needs. Budgeted equipment and expanded programs will require more income to achieve new goals.

The Forum is a sub ministry of Restoration Christian Community of Allegan. The plan is to launch and allow the organization to grow into a separate corporation. I project this will take place at phase Two. At the point of Phase Three we will be looking into office space to move into the final Phase Four which will be developed during Phase Three.

Current Situation

Pastor Austin Kreutz is a fulltime pastor at the church. As we approach Phase One and monies become available, he will become a pastor emeritus. This means he will be part of the church but will not be the lead pastor nor will he be given a salary from the church. His full support will come from the Bonhoeffer Forum. He will be fulltime at the Forum to develop it and be free to travel.

How to support

We are actively looking for a base of supporters who want to invest in The Forum. We are asking for a one-year commitment from individuals, Churches, and organizations to launch this ministry. Since the umbrella ministry is a church, all donations are tax deductible. Would you consider an investment into this ministry? Donations maybe given at our website atk4mi.org or contact Pastor Kreutz at 269 567 8330. If you have any questions, please contact us. Thank you for your prayerful consideration.