



## **Congregation Beth Shalom**

---

**of Brandon**

### **Policy for Addressing the Congregation from the Bimah**

*Approved 7/5/2022*

Politics and controversial issues should not be brought into the spiritual experience of a worship service or any speech from the bimah. The reasoning for this is backed up by the regulations of the Internal Revenue Service, which say that houses of worship and not-for-profit organizations that receive tax-exempt status are “prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office.” Legally, in order to be in compliance with the Internal Revenue Service’s rules for 501 C 3 tax exempt status, as a religious institution, we must meet their requirements.

Our sanctuary is a safe place. We, as a congregation, need to respect the sensibilities of our members. Members come to worship and learn Torah. Addressing politics and controversial topics should take place in special, designated programs where participants choose to come and listen rather than being a “captive” audience at a religious service, with people expressing political opinions from the Bimah.