



National Benevolent Association

XPLOR
FAITH, JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY

Witnessing a Political Revolution

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Living in Iowa during an election year has been a real treat for me. I have had the opportunity to see all of the presidential candidates as they have passed through town. Some I have chosen to see, and others I have opted out of seeing. But having the opportunity to be able to see them all has been a little overwhelming at times, but truly a blessing.

With the candidates in town all the time, the election seems to be more of a topic of conversation than in my hometown. Being able to talk with church members about why they feel certain candidates fit with their morals and beliefs. Truly beginning to understand why people lean towards one candidate or another. Listening and understanding how we may differ in political opinions and why we can all still be Christians and worship together.

I have never really been totally interested in the political process until arriving here in Iowa. I believe I have tracked my first interest in the political process to when I began watching *Scandal* on Netflix. After watching all of the seasons on Netflix in about two weeks, I was totally hooked. So how does *Scandal* get me into the political process, you may ask. Well, on *Scandal* they talk a lot about how things don't work like they should, and sometimes big money makes things happen, which I think is a lot like what happens today in our government. If you have a lot of money, you can do what you want and get away with it. I do not feel this is how our government should operate, and I felt the need to do something about it. But how?

#FeelingtheBern

Soon after arriving in the Quad Cities for NBA XPLOR, it wasn't long before I heard about this guy named Bernie Sanders. He was trying to start a political revolution in our country. In our XPLOR house, we had many discussions about Sanders and why we thought he was the candidate that best matched up with our morals and beliefs. We all felt very passionate about Senator Sanders and the work he was starting to do. As I listened more and more to what this man had to say, I began to have hope that what he was doing might actually work. I have had the opportunity to hear Senator Sanders speak in person twice now and have even gotten a selfie with him. He is an inspiration to me—he shows me that there are people that are willing to stand up and fight for what is right! We will not stand by and let the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. We will stand up for what we believe in. We will start a political revolution.

I was privileged enough to be able to attend the Iowa Caucus on Monday night, February 1. I attended with one of the pastors here, Rev. Linda Hunsaker, and members of our local congregation. I was not able to vote in this caucus, but I was able to observe the process. I must admit it was not like anything I have seen before, and it seemed to be chaotic to me. Pretty much what happens is everyone in your precinct piles into one room, and you gather in one corner or side of the room to stand with your preference group. Then, whoever is undecided is haggled until they choose a side.

Anyone in a preference group that doesn't meet 15 percent of the amount of people in the room is no longer viable, so they have to choose one of the other preference groups, so pretty much everyone fights over them. I have heard that in past caucuses sometimes people will bribe you with dinner and other things to get you to come to their side. I did not see this take place in our precinct, but they did put up some good arguments.

After you are in your preference groups, they now count each individual and see who has more. In our precinct there were 102 people for Hillary and 115 for Bernie. Our precinct had six delegates that were up for grabs, so they both got three delegates. In order for one or the other to get more, they needed to beat the other by 15 percent or more.

We the People



I knew this was going to be a tight race here in Iowa, and people really showed up to vote. As we listened as all of the precincts started reporting, it began to get closer and closer. Even though it was almost a tie and Secretary Clinton really won, I feel this was a huge victory for Bernie Sanders—not only is he fighting the other candidates, but he is also fighting big money, and that is not an easy thing to do. To come this far and actually have a real chance to win this thing is a victory in itself.

Even though the candidates are long gone from Iowa now and won't be back for another four years, I am a proud supporter of the political revolution that Bernie Sanders has started. I hope that people like me who had really given up on the political process will be re-energized and know that WE ARE THE PEOPLE. We are the democracy, and we have to be a part of it for it to actually work. #FeelingtheBern

*NBA XPLOR is a 10-month service residency opportunity for young adults ages 21-30, with the purpose of empowering young adults to discern and develop a “heart for care” as they live together in simple community, engage in direct service and justice work, engage in leadership development, and discern their vocational calls to honor the various communities they are called to serve. **Learn more at nbacares.org/xplor.***