

# 2019 RELIGIOUS LIBERTY ESSAY SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST

Sponsored by the Religious Liberty Council of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty

Entry forms are pages 2 and 3 of this document.

## Essay Topic

Houses of worship play an important role in American culture, often addressing issues of public concern. The current tax code permits 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofits, including houses of worship, to be political but not partisan. These religious and secular charitable organizations enjoy favored tax-exempt status and may engage in advocacy to address any moral and/or political issues. They may not, however, tell people who to vote for or against. President Donald Trump supports eliminating what is referred to as the “Johnson Amendment,” but most people of faith support the current law.

### **In an essay, share whether you think the “Johnson Amendment” should remain.**

Your essay should review why we have the “Johnson Amendment” in our current law and how it affects houses of worship, religious organizations and other charitable nonprofits.

## Eligibility

The contest is open to all high school students in the graduating classes of 2019 and 2020. There are no requirements regarding GPA, faith, after-school activities or clubs.

## Prizes

Grand Prize: \$2,000 & a trip for two to Washington, D.C.\*

Second Prize: \$1,000

Third Prize: \$500

## Length

800 (minimum) to 1,200 (maximum) words

Note: word count does not include title and bibliography

## Submission & Due Date

The essay, student registration form and essay adviser form all must be mailed together to the following address and **post-marked no later than March 8, 2019**. No email or fax entries will be accepted:

### **Baptist Joint Committee Essay Contest**

200 Maryland Avenue, N.E.

Washington, D.C. 20002

## Requirements

1. Submitted essays should be in 12-point type, double-spaced and single-sided. To ensure fairness, your name (or any other identifying info) should **not** appear on **any page** of the essay.

2. Essays must have a title at the top of the first page of the essay (do not use a title page), and all pages should be numbered.

3. Essays must be between 800-1,200 words, not counting the title and bibliography. Please do not fold or staple your essay; you may use a paper clip.

4. Sources must be used, cited and credited in a bibliography, consistent with an accepted citation style. Wikipedia may not be used as a source.

5. Each essay must be accompanied by an essay adviser form, signed to verify the essay is the student’s original work.

### **Essays failing to meet the requirements will not be judged.**

Winners will be announced by the end of summer 2019. The first-place winner will be recognized at the BJC board meeting in Washington, D.C., in October 2019. All entrants will hear from the Baptist Joint Committee by email or U.S. mail after the winners are selected.

## Essay Adviser Information

Students must have an “essay adviser” who verifies, to the best of his or her knowledge, that the essay is the student’s original work and may review the essay to ensure it meets all requirements. Advisers must be a teacher or counselor at the applicant’s school or on staff at the applicant’s house of worship. The adviser cannot be the student’s parent unless the parent home-schools the student. An adviser form must be mailed with the essay entry. An adviser may work with more than one student, but each essay must be submitted with its own adviser form.

## Judging Criteria

Entries will be judged on the depth of their content, the mastery of the topic and the skill with which they are written. Students should develop a point of view on the issue and demonstrate critical thinking, using appropriate examples, arguments and other evidence to support their position. Essays should be free of grammatical errors and should be clear, concise and well-organized. Judges reserve the right to reduce the number of awards.

Visit [BJCOnline.org/contest](http://BJCOnline.org/contest) for more information or contact Charles Watson Jr., BJC associate director of education, at [cwatson@BJCOnline.org](mailto:cwatson@BJCOnline.org).

**Note: All essays become property of the BJC and cannot be returned.**

\*Trip includes actual airfare costs to D.C. up to a predetermined amount and one night of lodging for the contest winner and one accompanying parent/guardian to present the winning essay at the BJC board meeting.

# 2019 Religious Liberty Essay Scholarship Contest



/ReligiousLiberty



## Student Registration Form

Entries must be postmarked by March 8, 2019 and in response to this year's topic about the Johnson Amendment.

**Include this form and the essay adviser form with your essay.**



@baptistjointcommittee



@BJContheHill

### Student Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (include area code) \_\_\_\_\_

Email (please print clearly) \_\_\_\_\_

*NOTE: You will receive an email after the winners are selected.*

School \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation year \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you learn about this scholarship contest? (Circle one)

FastWeb.com    Scholarships.com    Baptist Joint Committee    House of Worship    School/Teacher    Friend

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Essay Information

Title of essay \_\_\_\_\_

Exact word count of essay text (must be between 800-1,200) \_\_\_\_\_

### Essay Adviser Information

Adviser's name \_\_\_\_\_

Adviser's email \_\_\_\_\_

Adviser's phone number \_\_\_\_\_

*NOTE: You must have an essay adviser. He or she should fill out the "Essay Adviser Form," and it must be included with your entry.*

**Mail this page, the essay adviser form, and your essay to:**



Baptist Joint Committee Essay Contest  
200 Maryland Avenue, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002

# 2019 Religious Liberty Essay Scholarship Contest

## **Essay Adviser Form**

Must be included with student's entry

Entries must be postmarked by **March 8, 2019**



The essay adviser verifies that, to the best of his or her knowledge, the essay is the student's original work and may review it to ensure it meets all requirements. Advisers must be a teacher or counselor at the student's school or on staff at the student's house of worship. The adviser cannot be the student's parent unless the parent home-schools the student.

In the essay, the student must discuss whether the "Johnson Amendment" should remain.

Visit [BJCOnline.org/contest](http://BJCOnline.org/contest) for the complete writing prompt.

### **Essay Adviser Information**

*NOTE: you may be the essay adviser for more than one student, but you must include a copy of this form with each essay.*

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Name of school or house of worship \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Student's name \_\_\_\_\_

How do you know the student? \_\_\_\_\_

Sign below to verify, to the best of your knowledge, that the essay is the original composition of the student.

\_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to receive the topic for the 2020 contest via email? (Circle one): YES NO

Do you have suggestions for future contests? Please let us know below:

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