

Vote Faithfully Toolkit

Election Day: November 6, 2018

Prepared by The Episcopal Church
Office of Government Relations



“Voting and participation in our government is a way of participating in our common life and that is a Christian obligation.” -Presiding Bishop Michael Curry

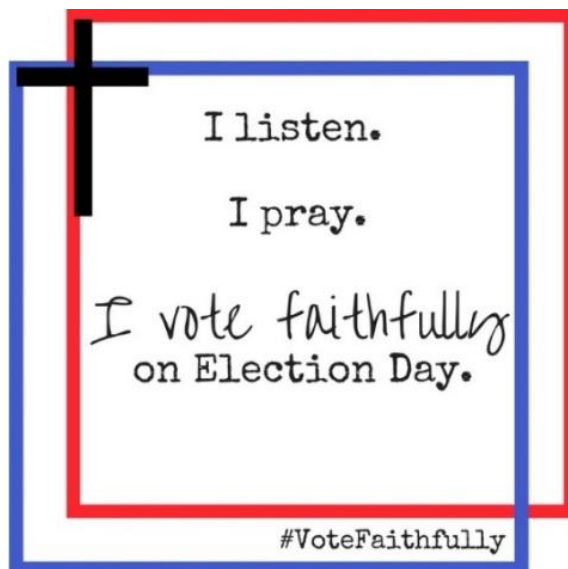
We can play a unique role in this election by empowering every voice in our congregations. Check out resources below for getting out the vote in your faith community! We will continue to update resources in the coming weeks so check back often or write to us with ideas at: eppn@episcopalchurch.org.

Included in this toolkit:

- + Action Steps: Register, Mobilize, Communicate, Advocate
- + Worship: Litany, Quotes, Music, Prayers

“We are blessed as a nation to vote. As citizens of this country this is a right, an obligation, and a duty. Go vote. Vote your conscience. Your conscience informed by what it means to **love your neighbor**, to participate in the process of **seeking the common good**, to participate in the process of **making this a better world**. However you vote, go and vote. And do that as followers of Jesus.” -Presiding Bishop Michael Curry

Note: Churches, as nonprofit organizations, must follow certain guidelines when participating in elections. Churches may not campaign, openly or otherwise, for or against candidates for public office. However, the IRS permits houses of worship to involve their members in the political process by helping them understand the issues, registering and encouraging them to vote, and inviting candidates to address them. Here are [more resources on what your church can and cannot do](#) during election season. The IRS also has a publication that you can use as a guide for your election engagement activities titled “[Tax Guide for Churches and Religious Organizations](#).”



Vote Faithfully Action

Register + Mobilize + Communicate + Advocate

Register to vote

We cannot engage in the public square through voting if we're not registered to vote! Don't procrastinate—get registered today!

- ✓ Visit <https://vote.gov/> to **get registered NOW**.
- ✓ If you're registering for the first time, don't do it alone! Find friends and fellow parishioners who aren't yet registered and **sign up together**.
- ✓ **Talk to youth and young adults** about the importance of registering and help get them registered. Many states allow voter registration before 18 years old if you will be 18 before the next election.
- ✓ **Host a voter registration drive**. [Use this toolkit](#) from Rock the Vote for information on hosting your own voter registration drive, including state-specific information.

Mobilize your community

Help your community members get to polling stations on Election Day. It is important to remember that churches are required by law to be non-partisan.

- ✓ **Join Lawyers and Collars**. This initiative engages pastors, imams, rabbis, and other faith leaders, to stand alongside lawyers at voting precincts of vulnerable citizens. They will provide a combined legal and moral presence against voter suppression, intimidation, and harassment. [Check out their website](#) for more information.
- ✓ **Give rides to the polls**. Not everyone has an easy means of transportation to get to their polling location. Use these signup sheets to match people willing to offer transportation with those who are in need of a ride to the polls.
[Sign up sheet for transportation volunteer](#)
[Sign up sheet for transportation needs](#)
- ✓ **Provide child care service during election hours**. Some voters with children may experience challenges to get to the polls due to child care needs. Use these signup sheets to find volunteers for providing child care and identifying those who are in need of child care while they go to cast their vote.
[Sign up sheet for childcare volunteer](#)
[Sign up sheet for childcare needs](#)
- ✓ **Make sure your community members know where to vote**. Finding your polling location is simple! You can now search “find my polling location” via Google and you will be directed to provide

your voting address. Google will provide early voting information, Election Day polling locations, and ballot information! You can also [go to Rock the Vote](#) for voting info.

- ✓ **Know the laws for community members with past criminal convictions.** Criminal disenfranchisement laws vary by state. Use and share [this resource](#) to inform people on their eligibility to vote.
- ✓ **Equip your community members with voter protection tools.** Make sure every member of your congregation knows where they can turn for help if they have trouble casting their ballot. Share [this information about election protection](#). **Include voter protection information in your church bulletin!**
- ✓ **Use the Civil Discourse Curriculum** to help engage your parish in conversations around civic engagement and the key issues in the campaign. Find the full curriculum [here](#).

Communicate

Use common church platforms for quick and easy communication to encourage your community to get out the vote.

- ✓ Announce Election Day in your church bulletin or newsletter. Familiarize your congregation with any services you are offering to help people get to the polls.
- ✓ Put up signs encouraging your community to #VoteFaithfully! Here is a sample:
Voting is service to our community. #VoteFaithfully this Election Day, November 6! Are you voting?
- ✓ Engage on social media. Demonstrate to your friends, family, and community your church's commitment to our common life this election season. Tell them that you #VoteFaithfully. Here are some sample posts:

When we vote, we publicly declare our commitment to love our neighbor and to seek the common good. Let's spread the word that we #VoteFaithfully!

I listen, I pray, and I #VoteFaithfully on Election Day!

I #VoteFaithfully because voting is a commitment we make to our community.

Advocate

Do not miss opportunities to write elected officials! Subscribe to the [Episcopal Public Policy Network email list](#) for action alerts or follow them on social media @TheEPPN on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Read resolutions the Episcopal Church General Convention passed in July related to elections:

- ✓ [Addressing the Issue of Voter Suppression](#)
- ✓ [Support of One Person, One Vote](#)



Vote Faithfully Sunday

Litany + Quotes + Music + Prayers

Make the Sunday before the election “Vote Faithfully Sunday”

Join with our Ecumenical partners in observing November 4th, the Sunday before Election Day, as "Vote Faithfully Sunday." Reflect on our commitment to the common good, provide others with the information they need to register to vote and to cast their ballot, and prepare to vote as a community.

Vote Faithfully Litany

By the Rev. Kwame Pitts, Interim Pastor, Redeemer Lutheran Church, ELCA

Oppression silences voices and hampers dreams and ambitions for ourselves and our neighbors. Liberation lets those voices be heard. God’s liberation opens the door for dreams and ambitions rooted in justice to have the chance to become reality. Casting a ballot is one way to proclaim liberty to the captives and to let the oppressed go free. Let your faith liberate you.

Let our faith inform our vote.

We remember when our nation’s foremothers had no agency, no voice, no vote. They were considered property, enslaved and not. We remember when white women got the right to vote, while others waited a few more decades. We confess the ways in which we did not reflect that we are all equal in the Creator’s eyes.

Let our faith inform our vote.

We remember when someone’s personhood and reality became a campaign issue. We still face someone’s personhood and reality being a campaign issue. The Creator doesn’t love creations with the most votes. We are loved regardless.

Let our faith inform our vote.

God loves us all, regardless. Let us learn from the times when the color of our skin, our gender, our educational attainments or our wealth or poverty determined the ability to have a voice. Let us repent and affirm the God-given dignity in all people. Let us protect and further the ability of all persons to be heard in society and through their ballots.

Let our faith inform our vote.

Let us liberate ourselves from bigotry and divisiveness.

Let our faith inform our vote.

Quotes for thought and communal reflection

By Minister Jason Carson Wilson, M. Div., Justice and Peace Policy Fellow, United Church of Christ

Ephesians 4:31-32: Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.

Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States of America: "Always vote for principle, though you may vote alone, and you may cherish the sweetest reflection that your vote is never lost."

Bayard Rustin: "If we desire a society of peace, then we cannot achieve such a society through violence. If we desire a society without discrimination, then we must not discriminate against anyone in the process of building this society. If we desire a society that is democratic, then democracy must become a means as well as an end."

Audre Lorde, *Our Dead Behind Us: Poems*: "It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences."

Isaiah 58:6-10:

"Is this not the fast which I choose,
To loosen the bonds of wickedness,
To undo the bands of the yoke,
And to let the oppressed go free
And break every yoke?
Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry
And bring the homeless poor into the house;
When you see the naked, to cover him;
And not to hide yourself from your own flesh?"

Music

- ✓ "Give Me Jesus" - Arranged by Garrett Hedlund
- ✓ "Somebody's Knocking At The Door" - Arranged by Ronald Melrose
- ✓ "Music Down In My Soul" - Moses Hogan
- ✓ Suggested Hymns:
 - "We Are Marching In The Light"
 - "Cuando el pobre, When the Poor Ones"
 - "Now, Behold The Lamb"
 - "Lead Me, Guide Me"

Prayers of the People

By Rev. Shannon Kelly, Missioner for Young Adult and Campus Ministries, The Episcopal Church

Loving God, creator of this world who is the source of our wisdom and understanding, watch over this nation during this time of election. Help us to see how our faith informs our principles and actions.

Intercessor: God, our creator,

People: Guide us in truth and love.

We give thanks for the right to vote. Help us to hold this privilege and responsibility with the care and awareness it merits, realizing that our vote matters and that it is an act of faith.

Intercessor: God, our creator,

People: Guide us in truth and love.

Guide us through this election as a nation, state, and community as we vote for people to do work on our behalf and on the behalf of our communities. Help us to vote for people and ballot initiatives that will better our community and our world so it may reflect the values Christ taught us.

Intercessor: God, our creator,

People: Guide us in truth and love.

Help us create communities that will build your kingdom here on earth – communities that will protect the poor, stand up for the vulnerable, advocate for those who are not seen and heard, and listen to everyone's voice.

Intercessor: God, our creator,

People: Guide us in truth and love.

We pray for this nation that is deeply divided. May we come together for the common good and do as you have called us to do – to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you through creation.

Intercessor: God, our creator,

People: Guide us in truth and love.

Help us act out of love, mercy and justice rather than out of arrogance or fear.

Intercessor: God, our creator,

People: Guide us in truth and love.

Lord, continue to guide us as we work for the welfare of this world. We pray for places that are torn by violence, that they may know peace.

Intercessor: God, our creator,

People: Guide us in truth and love.

We pray for communities who are struggling with inequality, unrest, and fear. May we all work toward reconciliation with one another and with God.

Intercessor: God, our creator,

People: Guide us in truth and love.

Help us to listen in love, work together in peace, and collaborate with one another as we seek the betterment of our community and world.

Intercessor: God, our creator,

People: Guide us in truth and love.