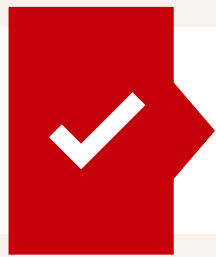


FAITHS UNITED to SAVE DEMOCRACY

ELECTION PREPARATION PLAN FOR FAITH LEADERS

As clergy and faith leaders, your unique position within the community allows you to foster an environment of informed, engaged, and peaceful participation in the electoral process. This checklist offers practical steps and resources to guide you and your congregation in preparing for the upcoming election months before election day.

For support in customizing your plan, contact Rev. Moya Harris
mharris@sojo.net



Use Voter Registration Tools to Ensure Everyone Can Vote



Develop a Voter Engagement Volunteer Committee



Evaluate Your Leaders + Identify Young Leaders



Develop a Plan to Link Theological Engagement + Civic Participation



Address Your Congregation's Mental Health

FAITHS UNITED to SAVE DEMOCRACY

ELECTION PREPARATION PLAN FOR FAITH LEADERS



Use Voter Registration Tools to Ensure Everyone Can Vote

- Encourage members to register or check their registration status to ensure they have not been purged from rolls.
 - www.vote.org
 - www.sojo.net/vote
- Review voter identification rules.
 - www.voteriders.org provides free state-by-state assistance via their website.
- Ensure seniors and disabled voters have access to absentee ballots that often have earlier deadlines.
- Understanding Deadlines:
 - Familiarize yourself with the deadlines for voter registration and absentee ballot applications in your state.
 - Visit <https://www.usvotefoundation.org/state-election-dates-and-deadlines> to find specific deadlines for your state.
- Communication Strategies:
 - Disseminate this information through multiple channels within your congregation, including worship bulletins or pamphlets, online announcements, and direct communication with seniors' ministries.
 - Dedicate time during services to share this crucial information.
 - Use [FUSD Messaging Guide](#) to encourage all to vote.
- Organize volunteers to provide one-on-one assistance to seniors and disabled voters, helping them navigate the absentee ballot process.

Key Message: Check your registration now so there is time to address any concerns and changes needed. Know your voter ID laws for 2024.

FAITHS UNITED to SAVE DEMOCRACY

ELECTION PREPARATION PLAN FOR FAITH LEADERS



Develop a Voter Engagement Volunteer Committee

- Recruit enthusiastic and capable volunteers.
 - Tap into different committees to increase enthusiasm – hospitality, young adults, seniors, and music teams.
- Publicly endorse these leaders within your faith community and leadership forums.
- Task the committee with generating voter engagement strategies and exploring partnerships with local organizations.
 - Share the FUSD Toolkit *How to Prepare Your House of Worship for the Election* with committee.
- Consider now how you will engage with candidates during worship services during this election season and beyond.
 - Houses of worship have the opportunity to hold candidates and elected officials accountable through prophetic voice and witness. A congregation should be clear of their non-partisan status.
 - If you have candidates speak to the congregation, remember you must remain non-partisan, allowing the opportunity for candidates from both parties the opportunity to speak.
 - If you allow them to speak, consider, will you allow them to speak from the pulpit or podium or from the floor?
 - NOTE: The optics of speaking from the pulpit can appear to be an endorsement. It allows for photo opportunities for campaigns.
 - NOTE: Use caution when taking pictures with candidates. Social media posts without context can fuel questionable narratives.
 - SUGGESTION: Consider providing opportunity for candidates to talk with members after service. Encourage members to engage candidates in topics that impact their community and personal life.

Key Message: Emphasize that civic engagement is an integral part of our faith journey.

Let FUSD help! Support for the committee is available, contact Rev. Harris at mharris@sojo.net.

FAITHS UNITED to SAVE DEMOCRACY

ELECTION PREPARATION PLAN FOR FAITH LEADERS



Evaluate Your Leaders + Identify Young Leaders

- Consult seasoned members for recommendations on **new leadership** during the election season. This is a great opportunity for people to serve on a short-term effort.
- Identify **emerging young leaders** within your congregation.
- Involve young people in leadership roles, including them decision-making decisions on the committee to create a multi-generational effort. Young inclusion builds trust and increases the chance of young adult voter participation.
- If you have multi-lingual or multi-cultural ministries or services, reach out to youth and leadership in those ministries to participate. FUSD and its partners have multi-lingual resources to share.

Goal: Encourage a diverse volunteer base that includes a broad range of perspectives and skills. Engage young voters early.



Develop a Plan to Link Theological Engagement + Civic Participation

- Undertake a preaching series on voting that explores new sacred texts each month.
 - Choose texts that underscore God's justice and love of all creation and highlights the Imperative to care for those affected by poverty and oppression.
- Organize a study series on Civic Engagement that connects faith with the responsibility of civic engagement.

Resources for Commentary and Study:

Christian Resources

- [Preaching the Word](#) - Sojourners
- Over 2000 Scripture verses on poverty and justice <https://sojo.net/list-some-more-2000verses-scripture-poverty-and-justice>
- Preaching God's Transforming Justice: A Lectionary Commentary Years A, B, C
- Jesus and the Disinherited by Howard Thurman
- The Politics of Jesus by Obery Hendricks Jr.

Jewish Resources

- <https://rac.org/issues/civil-rights-voting-rights>
- <https://truah.org/resources/election-center/>

Muslim Resources

- [Muslim Civic Engagement Toolkit-community members](#)
- [Muslim Civic Engagement Toolkit-Faith Leaders](#)
- <https://yaqeeninstitute.org/read/paper/the-idea-of-justice-in-the-quran>

FAITHS UNITED to SAVE DEMOCRACY

ELECTION PREPARATION PLAN FOR FAITH LEADERS



Address Your Congregation's Mental Health

Stress and anxiety are increased during election cycles and this is a season to prepare for more spiritual care. Acknowledging fear and providing support during and after an election is important.

- Form a group to organize seminars and prayer meetings focused on managing election-related stress.
- Encourage ministries to initiate book clubs focused on mental wellness.
- Schedule regular prayer sessions throughout the year to foster a sense of peace and community resilience.
- Resource Suggestions:
 - *Psalms for Black Lives: Reflections for the Work of Liberation* by Gabby Cudjoe-Wilkes and Andrew Wilkes
 - *Rest for the Justice Seeking Soul* by Susan K. Smith
 - *Breath as Prayer: Calm Your Anxiety, Focus Your Mind, and Renew Your Soul* by Jennifer Tucker
 - Pre-election stress resource for adults and children:
<https://www.crisistextline.org/topics/election-stress/#coping-with-pre-election-stress-1>
 - Mental Health Resources for the Muslim Community:
<https://amhp.us/mental-health-resources>
 - Mental Health Resources for the Jewish Community:
<https://prizmah.org/knowledge/resource/jewish-mental-health-organizations>
 - Info on intersection of faith and mental health:
<https://www.nami.org/from-the-ceo/the-intersection-of-faith-and-mental-health/>



By incorporating these steps and resources into your congregational activities, you can play a pivotal role in guiding your community through the election season with grace, wisdom, and an informed perspective. This approach not only strengthens the civic fabric of our society but also deepens the collective understanding of faith's role in societal engagement.

Download the Faiths United to Save Democracy Toolkit
How to Prepare Your House of Worship for the Election
which includes detailed information and sample content
<https://www.turnoutsunday.com/votertoolkit>