



ELECTION PREPARATION PLAN FOR CLERGY

As clergy, 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

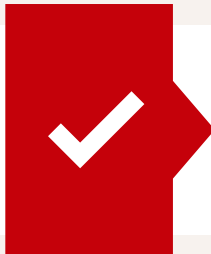


Develop a Plan to Link Theological Engagement + Civic Participation



Address Your Congregation's Mental Health

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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 Sunday bulletins, online announcements, and direct communication with seniors' ministries.
 - Dedicate time during services to share this crucial information.
- 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.

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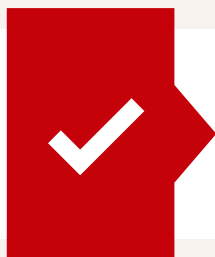
Develop a Voter Engagement Volunteer Committee

- 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 church 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.
 - The church has the opportunity to hold candidates and elected officials accountable through her 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 for candidates from both parties the opportunity to speak.
 - If you allow them to speak, will you allow them to speak from the pulpit or from the floor.
 - The optics of speaking from the pulpit can appear to be an endorsement. It allows for photo opportunities for campaigns.
 - We suggest you allow all candidates to be acknowledged from the floor only, allowing members to approach them after service has ended.

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

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

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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.
- Make sure young leaders are involved and in decision-making roles within the voter engagement committee to create a multi-generational effort.
- 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.

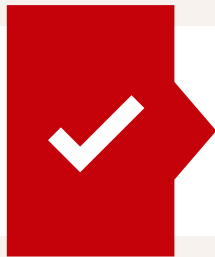


Develop a Plan to Link Theological Engagement + Civic Participation

- Undertake a preaching series on voting that explores new biblical texts each month.
 - Choose scriptures that underscore God's justice and Jesus' mission of liberation.
- Organize a Bible Study Series on Civic Engagement that connects faith with the responsibility of civic engagement.
- Resources for Commentary and Study:
 - *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.
 - Preaching the Word - Sojourners
 - Over 2000 Scripture verses on poverty and justice avail:

<https://sojo.net/list-some-more-2000verses-scripture-poverty-and-justice>

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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
 - Visit <https://www.crisistextline.org/topics/election-stress/#coping-with-pre-election-stress-1> for resources on how to cope with election stress for both adults and children



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>