



ADVOCACY IN SERVICE TO OUR NEIGHBOR

Why do Lutherans celebrate the “God’s work. Our hands.” day of service? Because we care about our communities, and because we witness to the love of God in our localities. Lutheran social teaching affirms a shared commitment to the common good, marked by dignity, equity and the well being of all our neighbors. Through education, encouragement and faithful presence, our civic engagement helps to ensure that every voice is heard and every vote is counted.

The [“God’s work. Our hands.” tool kit](#) for 2026 offers several ways to express advocacy in service to our neighbors. This supplement provides such resources as:

- A template letter for congregation use.
- Additional ideas for advancing community witness in this election season.

TEMPLATE LETTER

From idea prompts in the [“God’s work. Our hands.” day of service tool kit](#), congregations are invited to use a template letter to reach out to elected officials. Some congregations may prefer that method to Action Alert digital tools in the [ELCA Action Center](#). The template letter is in the appendix.

The ELCA Witness in Society staff would be happy to deliver your collected day-of-service letters to federal lawmakers. Send them to:

ELCA Washington Office
10 G Street Northeast, Suite 490
Washington, DC 20002

The Rev. Amy Reumann, senior director of ELCA Witness in Society, reminds us, “As the people of God, called and sent to the world, we can express love for our neighbors through our public testimony, a hope-filled witness to the good news of Jesus Christ through civic engagement in our communities.” Thank you for your advocacy!

COMMUNITY WITNESS IN THIS ELECTION SEASON

Lutherans recognize government as a gift through which God works to preserve life and promote justice for the neighbor. The ELCA’s social teaching affirms that civic participation, including voting and election engagement, is one way in which Christians live out their baptismal vocation in service to the world.

This vocation becomes especially visible on Election Day, as the nation grapples with decisions that will impact events for years to come. Elections provide a structured way for people to shape policies, choose leaders accountable for the well-being of all and ensure that every voice is heard, especially those of people on the margins. **The midterm congressional elections are just around the corner, on Nov. 3.**



The “**God’s work. Our hands.**” day of service falls during “prime time” for civic engagement. The following seven weeks bring:

- [National Voter Registration Day](#) (Sept. 15).
- [National Voter Education Week](#) (Oct. 5-9).
- [Election Hero Day](#) (Oct. 20).
- [Vote Early Day](#) (Oct. 27).

As a church, we affirm the importance of government, specifically democratic self-governance. An important part of faithful civic engagement is abiding by the law. For more, see “[Being a Public Church in the Electoral Process: A Guide for Churches and Rostered Ministers.](#)”

GET THE CONVERSATION FLOWING

To get conversation flowing, the “[Intergenerational Convo Starter](#)” invites us to celebrate the privilege of voting in a democracy, asking, “What was it like the first time you voted?” and “How has your faith impacted your voting choices?” ELCA social teaching documents dig deeper into our foundation as Lutherans. They include:

- The ELCA social message “[Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy.](#)”
 - A companion [study guide](#) is available
 - The 17-minute video “[What Are the Objectives of Democracy in the United States,](#)” featuring the Rev. Pamela Hoh, touches on some key concepts in civics education.
- The ELCA social statement [Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All](#), plus:
 - An [ELCA study guide](#).
 - A [study guide](#) from Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania.
 - A [reading of the social statement](#) from the ELCA Advocacy podcast, “Here I Pod.”

ASSIST WITH ACCESSING THE RIGHT AND CELEBRATING THE GIFT

Asked about the first time he voted, an ELCA member said: “Mainly, my memory is of seeing your neighbors. It was a civic duty, and a social occasion as well. After all, no matter however each of us voted, we all lived with the consequences!”

Let’s assist our neighbors in accessing this right:

- Easy-to-reference tips are available in the ELCA Election Engagement Toolkit (based on the [ELCA Civic Engagement Guide](#)) for several activities. Pick an activity for your day of service, such as **holding a voter registration drive** — maybe at an atypical location, such as an assisted living facility, or with [people who are homeless](#).

And let’s celebrate the right that is the privilege of voting in a democracy.

- Learn about **opportunities on Election Day, such as being a poll worker or poll watcher**, and attend or organize a training session.



- **Plan a hospitality activity** to nurture the community and the public servants who make the process run smoothly.
- Meet with local faith groups and **prepare for a prayer vigil or other public witness** — or even a barbecue or art display! — to ground Election Day in prayer.

As people of faith, ELCA members recognize elections as an expression of our call to love and serve our neighbor. We promote nonpartisan civic participation that strengthens democracy, protects human dignity and supports the common good. Grounded in Scripture and our Lutheran commitments to justice and public life, we must encourage all people to vote, advocate and build a society where every voice matters.



LETTER TEMPLATE

Here's a sample – and some of the elements – to guide what YOU want to write! Use the following blank page to write your letter, then send it to ELCA Washington Office, 10 G Street NE, Suite 490, Washington DC 20002 for delivery to lawmakers.

Date ● —

The Honorable [name] ● —
United States Senate
123 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: ??? ● —

Dear Senator [name]: ● —

As a Christian, your constituent and a resident of [town], I am writing to you about... ● —

My congregation in your district, [name], operates a food pantry that serves over 200 of our neighbors and members every week... ● —

Sincerely,

[signature] ● —

[Name]
123 Main Street
Our Town, WI 12345
abc.xyz@email.xyz

TIPS FOR YOUR LETTER

Month, Day, Year

Use proper title; if you're not sure, look it up online: emilypost.com/advice/official-forms-of-address.

List subject you want to discuss

Use proper form of address

Begin by clearly stating your strongest point or position.

Include a personal story or experience to illustrate why the issue is important to you and how it affects you, your neighbors and your community.

Ask for a response if you desire one, being sure to include your contact information with your signature.

Sign, then print your name, and be sure to include your address.



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