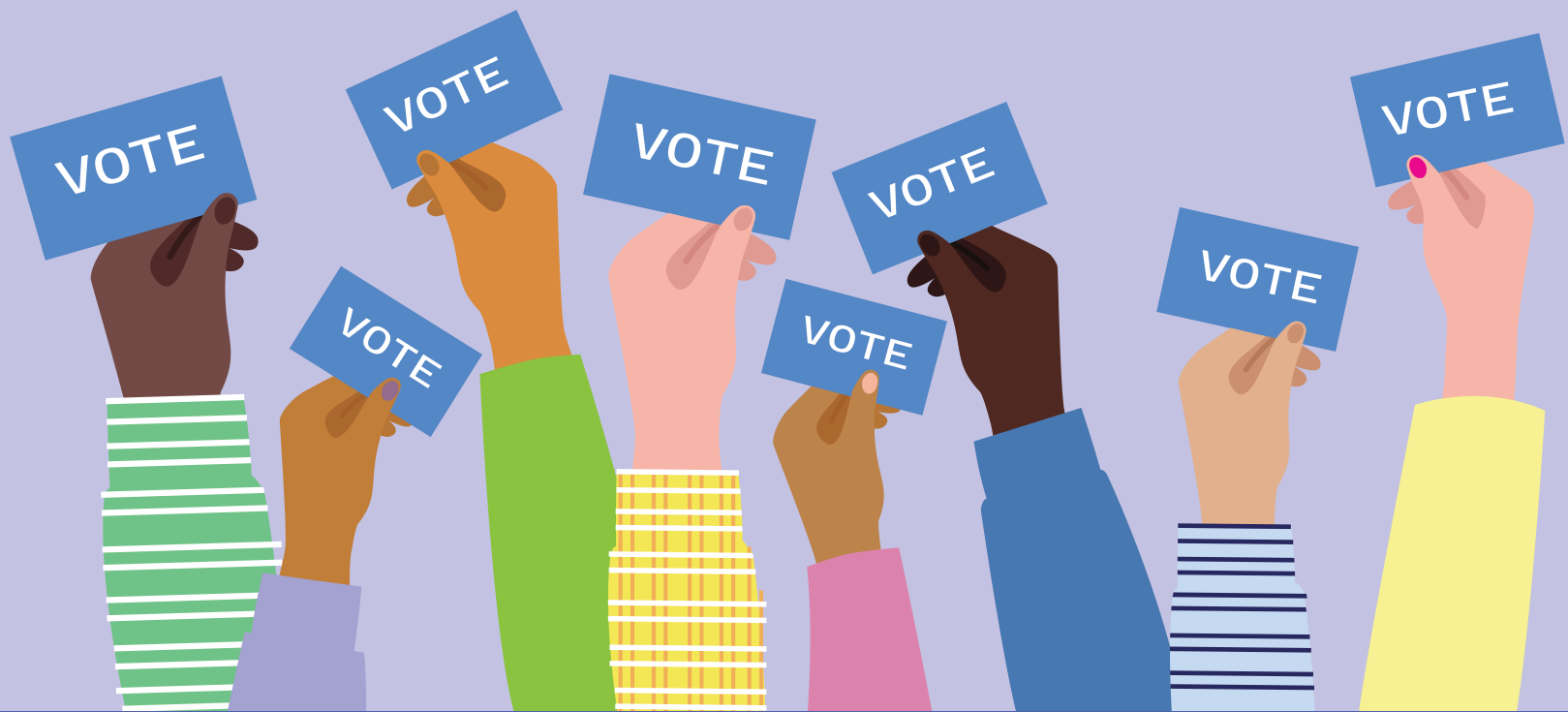


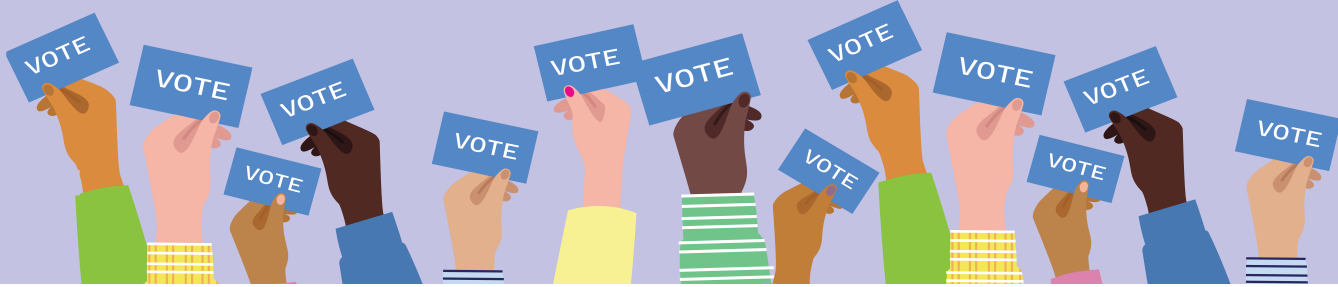


ELCA ELECTION ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

This ELCA Election Engagement Toolkit contains succinct inspiration and tools to activate and energize love in an election season as people and communities of faith.

Follow the footprints to action steps from beginning to challenging, and find reflections from ELCA social teaching along the way.





Election Engagement as Faithful Civic Witness

In the Lutheran tradition, “life in society involves honoring God’s two ways of rule: the right hand, which channels God’s forgiveness and unmerited love, and the left hand, which channels God’s love into just governance on earth.”¹

Civic engagement in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) arises both from concern about disorder and injustice and from a hopeful commitment to the well-being of all people. In its social teaching, the ELCA calls on members of this church “to pray, participate in, and advocate for civic life in the United States.” This includes “supporting efforts to increase voter registration and access to polling places, and to help dismantle structural barriers to the ballot box and to civic participation more broadly, all as part of this church’s faithful civic witness.”²

An important part of faithful civic engagement is abiding by the law. Any participation by congregations in activities related to the electoral process must be strictly nonpartisan and abide by Internal Revenue Service (IRS) guidelines. Congregations and rostered ministers must ensure that activities related to the electoral process are transparent, nonpartisan and legal.

Find [*“Being a Public Church in the Electoral Process: A Guide for Churches and Rostered Ministers”*](#) in the ELCA Resource Center. This resource includes such items as the “Acceptability of Election Activities Chart,” which can help discern nonpartisan activities.

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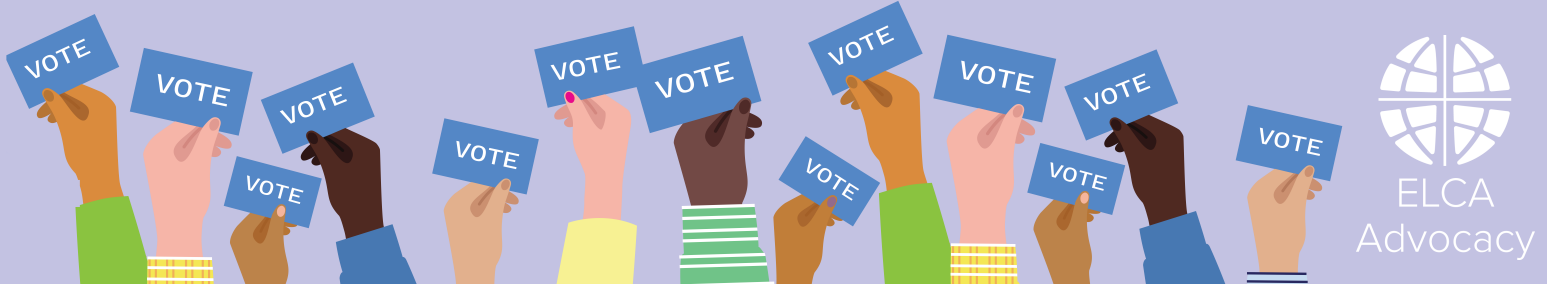
This ELCA Election Engagement Toolkit contains succinct inspiration and tools to activate and energize ways to channel love in an election season as people and communities of faith.

Look for footprints in each section to Action Steps: *Beginning, Ready for More* and *Challenging*.



¹ ELCA social message [“Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy”](#) (p. 17)

² ELCA social statement [Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All](#) (p. 89)



Getting the Conversation Started

A resource from Women of the ELCA titled “Called to be political (But I don’t want to be political!)” captures a sentiment that may be familiar in your congregation. Would it surprise you to know that this resource debuted in 2002? In 2023, the Pew Research Center [reported](#) that 65% of Americans say they always or often feel exhausted when thinking about politics because of the country’s deep partisan divisions.

Having discussions about connections between faith and civic engagement in an election season can strengthen vision, support and mobilization for activity in a group or congregation with which you are involved.

Beginning

- [“Called to be political \(But I don’t want to be political!\)”](#) from Women of the ELCA is a workshop guide described as “a fascinating glimpse into the teachings of Martin Luther on the role of Christians in politics. It’s the History Channel and confirmation class all rolled into one.”
- [“Faithful Election Engagement”](#) from ELCA Young Adults is a single page of Bible passages and questions to get conversation flowing.
- [“Bible Study: The Magnificat Can Be a Dangerous Song”](#) and other **Bible studies** with discussion questions can be found in the ELCA Resource Center using “Select Topic First: Advocacy” and “Subcategories: Civic Engagement.”

Ready for More

- [“Intergenerational Conversation Starter”](#) pairs people together to break the ice with the questions: “What was it like the first time you voted?” and “How has your faith impacted your voting choices?”
- Every community deserves adequate representation. Learn more about the **challenges to voting** with these starter resources:



“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!”

—A “first time you voted” response shared in the Intergenerational Convo Starter

- The [“Fact & Activity Sheet on Race and Voting”](#) includes activity and discussion prompts on voter suppression.
- [“Supporting Ballot Access in Rural Communities”](#) gets the spotlight from Aspen Institute, as does voter engagement in [“Who are Small Towns and Rural Communities”](#) from nonprofitvote.org.
- [“Voting for All Americans: Native Americans”](#) from the National Conference of State Legislatures discusses the distinct challenges that Native American voters, especially those who live on reservations, may face based on rural locations, limited residential mail delivery, housing insecurity and more.
- Study guides accompany most ELCA social teaching documents, including:
 - [“Discipleship in a democracy: How should Lutherans be involved in politics?”](#) a Living Lutheran article that introduced the ELCA social message “Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy.”
 - [Civic Life Study Guides](#), which includes six sessions that explore the ELCA social statement Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All.

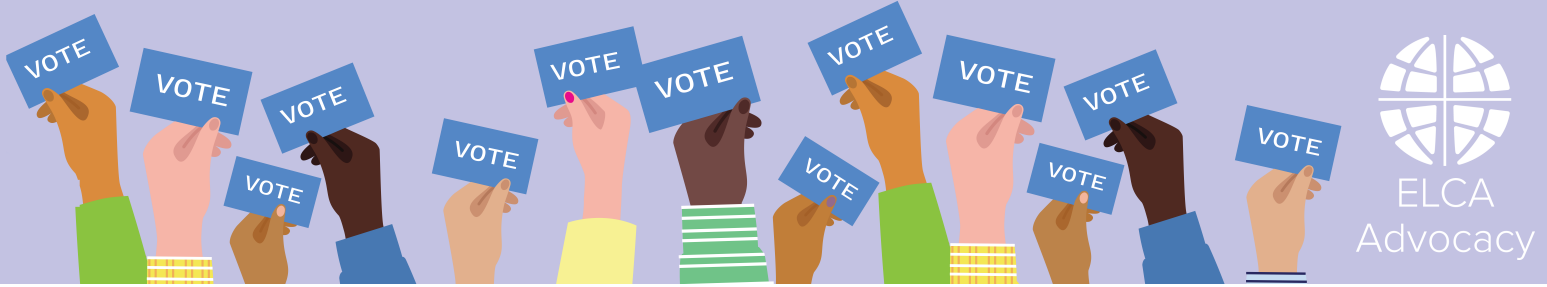


Challenging

- [“Ethics and Democracy”](#) gets focus in the Journal of Lutheran Ethics (April/May 2026 issue), including a congregation discussion guide to aid exploration.
- Ready to take on **dialogues to advance depolarization?**
 - The [Talanoa Dialogue Process](#) can create space for new perspectives.
 - [Braver Angels](#) offers several guides to facilitate these talks.
 - [“Graceful Conversations”](#), a five-session workshop series from Lutheran Advocacy—Minnesota and the Ministry Lab, helps communities talk openly about issues facing our country and our church.

“As members of the ELCA and as residents of this nation we will have serious disagreements about specific policy choices regarding what government should do or not do. We recognize that our siblings in faith can, in good conscience, reach different conclusions as to how to best serve our neighbor in complex circumstances...Although we may disagree about the best ways to achieve the public good, we do not disagree about our shared responsibility to seek it.”

—ELCA social message [“Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy”](#) (pp. 17-18)



Planning to Vote



As you smack the alarm on your bedside table, you catch the notification: Election Day Today. Good thing you have a plan! Or do you?

Gathering information and sharing it can help you, your neighbors and your neighborhood prepare. Here are some touchpoints that can be fuzzy without forethought. Jump to actions below for a way to share with others!

WHEN IS VOTING DAY?

This tidbit shouldn't be taken for granted! A visual reminder of the day and date helps.

REGISTRATION

This is a biggie. It is a good idea for each of us to check our registration status to avoid possible roadblocks on Election Day. If someone has not registered yet, independently or with assistance, that person should check state guidelines and deadlines to proceed. Vote.gov is a great place to start, as is searching your state's official election website.

VOTING ELIGIBILITY RULES

Our Christian communities include people with as many backgrounds as can be found among God's children! There are some basic stipulations about who can and cannot vote, but questions can arise. Does being convicted of a felony impact one's access to voting? For those experiencing homelessness, does not having a residential address impact access? Explore local rules with tools at usa.gov/who-can-vote and contact your state or local election office with questions.

WAYS TO CAST A BALLOT

- **Absentee and vote by mail:** These voting methods have stipulations that determine if they are available to a voter in your locality. Variations include how to request use, why a method would be available in lieu of in-person voting, and where to return a ballot.
- **Early voting:** State laws vary greatly. Find some state-by-state early voting information at vote.org/early-voting-calendar and your state's official election website.

Although he had voted many times in his town, Alex did a quick check of his voting registration status and was surprised to learn he had been dropped from the rolls! He was glad he checked — seems a new phone number caused the error — but now he had time for correction.

—Experience told to an ELCA staff member



- **In-person voting:** Knowing where and when to show up, as well as what to bring, matters!
- **Polling place location:** One place to double check is vote.org/polling-place-locator.
- **Hours:** Poll opening and closing times vary by state, and in some cases vary by city or county. Rules about how waiting lines to cast a ballot are addressed and voting times are also worth a check!

ID REQUIREMENTS

ID requirements for voting differ from state to state for in-person voting. Among ways to get the facts for your locality is a [lookup tool](#) from the National Conference of State Legislatures. Check early as it can take time to acquire lost-in-the-mail voter registration cards or other needed documentation!

WHAT'S ON THE BALLOT?

There's usually more going on than clamoring ads indicate! Mailed or online sample ballots from a jurisdiction can help a voter anticipate decisions to be made. Vote411.org/ballot also includes a tool for researching candidates and ballot measures.



Beginning

- Post the **[“Prepared to Vote Checklist”](#)** in your congregation’s lobby and leave a stack for people to share.
- Post the “Prepared to Vote Checklist” in a location associated with your congregation, **like a food pantry or shelter program**.



Ready for More

- If you’ve done the homework to research other considerations, like voter ID requirements in your locality, turn them into **your own flyer or bulletin insert** and share!

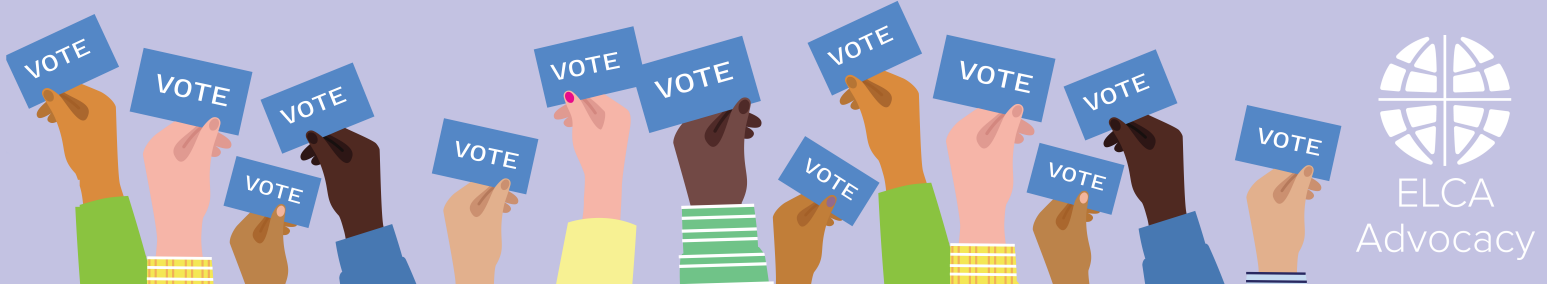


Challenging

- Engage local leaders and experts to speak in your congregation or at a co-organized event to share more about **who and what is on your local ballot**. See the **[“ELCA Civic Engagement Guide”](#)** for more tips, as well as **[“Being a Public Church in the Electoral Process: A Guide for Churches and Rostered Ministers.”](#)**
- Being prepared to vote gives a hint about how much state election officials do to make this process work! Consider reaching out to your local officials to offer support and ask how you can help. See **“[Cultivating Relationships with Local Election Officials](#)”** in the ELCA Resource Center for more!

“This church also strongly affirms voting, guided by faith-based values, as an exercise in citizenship.”

—ELCA social message **[“Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy”](#)** (p. 16)



Voter Registration Initiatives

Many obstacles can keep people from getting to the polls during elections, and lack of knowledge about voter registration is one of the biggest. Voter registration initiatives can be a valuable act of nonpartisan election engagement in service to our neighbors and neighborhoods.

Some of us need to register for the first time. Some of us need to check our voter registration status for confirmation — for identifying lapses, inaccuracies or surprises that may require action. Some of us face significant barriers to registering at a government office or online and could benefit from assistance.

Registration is a state-by-state process. In general, your state's official election website will readily navigate you to accurate registration information — starting with registration deadlines! The site vote.gov/register can serve as a starting place to **register** to vote, **update** info if you're already registered, **check** your registration status and **obtain** a voter registration card.

“At my retirement complex, they announced volunteers would be there one afternoon to help us vote. I sat down with Janey who checked that my new address was on my voter registration record and told me what to expect. She was very nice. So I guess I will vote this year!”

—Experience told to a granddaughter



Beginning

- Pick a Sunday or another gathering day in your worship community to **host a table equipped with a computer (or QR codes to websites if people use their own devices) and staffed with volunteers to help people confirm their voter registration status.** Confirming or initiating the process will keep registration from being a barrier to casting one's ballot!
- Why not **offer this service at a neighborhood event or location** as an act of community service. Voter Registration Day falls in September, which could be an opportunity! As involvement must be strictly nonpartisan, review [“Being a Public Church in the Electoral Process: A Guide for Churches and Rostered Ministers.”](#)



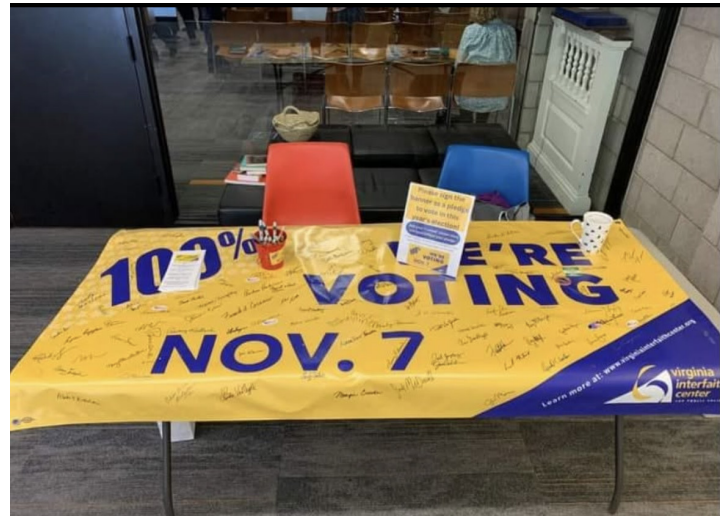
Ready for More

- Expand your registration activity with **an accompanying “Pledge to Vote” initiative**. See the [“ELCA Civic Engagement Guide”](#) for a worksheet.
- Talk to people facing barriers to voting and **come alongside with registration assistance**. This may include people who are elderly, disabled or without a residence. The ELCA [“Voter guidelines for people facing homelessness”](#) and the ELCA Advocacy Blog post [“Voting dialogue with persons with disabilities”](#) may stimulate ideas.



Challenging

- Some locations with ELCA-affiliated state public policy offices have taken part in **advancing a “100% Voting Congregation” goal**, committing to civic participation and ensuring that every eligible member of a congregation is registered and casts their ballot.

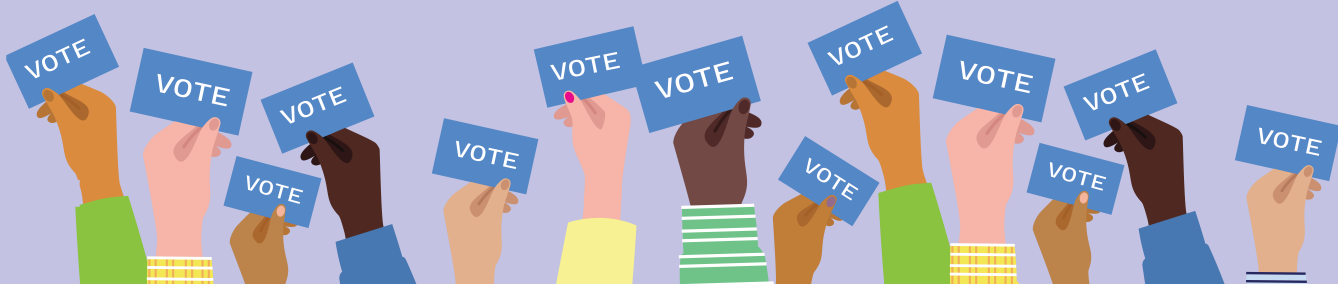


This congregation in Richmond, Virg. took on the “100 Voting Challenge” in 2023.

Photo courtesy of Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy in the ELCA-affiliated State Public Policy Office network.

Be it resolved, “that members, congregations, and synods of this church be encouraged to ‘promote public life worthy of the name’ by speaking out as an advocate and engaging in local efforts such as voter registration and supporting legislation to guarantee the right to vote to all citizens.”

—ELCA social policy resolution [“Voting Rights to All Citizens”](#)



Election Day Turnout Support

We can encourage our entire community, regardless of political affiliation or allegiance, to visit the polls on Election Day! “Government systems should strive to include the perspectives of those affected by their decisions and to seek fair representation of the communities they serve,” notes the ELCA social message “Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy” ([p. 12](#)). Our nonpartisan election engagement as people of faith can contribute to turnout efforts.

A common misconception is that the same nonvoters always opt out due to apathy, disengagement, or disenchantment with the with the electoral system. In fact, while most Americans cast ballots in the last several elections, the same individuals did not vote consistently...

Demographic factors, including age, race, location and education, may be indicators of likely voting activity and invite specific appeals or support for voting. In every context, most congregations probably have a mix of people who always vote, never vote and those who vote intermittently.”

—The Rev. Amy E. Reumann, ELCA senior director for Witness in Society, published in *Working Preacher* (9/6/24)



Tools to support Election Day participation intertwine with other efforts, including promoting voting plans and voter registration. They can go hand in hand with turnout activities such as:

- **Get out the vote (GOTV) drives.** This is kind of a catch-all concept that refers to meaningful encouragement. Giving thought to the many things that can keep people from getting to the polls lends itself to creative support. As a church or as part of a coalition, nonpartisan GOTV initiatives can help unite members of your community and mobilize participation.
- **Voter pledges.** Online petitions, tangible note cards and clipboards with paper and pen invite voters to commit to taking action on Election Day. The “Pledge to Vote Signup Sheet” in the [ELCA Civic Engagement Guide](#) also invites connection with new helpers and permission to do more.



Beginning

- **Pull together a team months in advance** to plan and implement Election Day turnout.
- Get out those computers or online tools and invite people to pledge to vote! Election Day may be in the news, but **nothing takes the place of personal contact to encourage one another.**
- Use what you know in lived experience and community accompaniment to contemplate barriers. Campus groups, young families, nondrivers and others may benefit from targeted GOTV support such as **preelection registration-check booths, Election Day childcare or church van transportation.**



Ready for More

- **Provide reminders.** This could include a congregation phone tree or outreach to people who invited that action during a voter pledge activity.
- **Use social media to build nonpartisan momentum** toward Election Day.

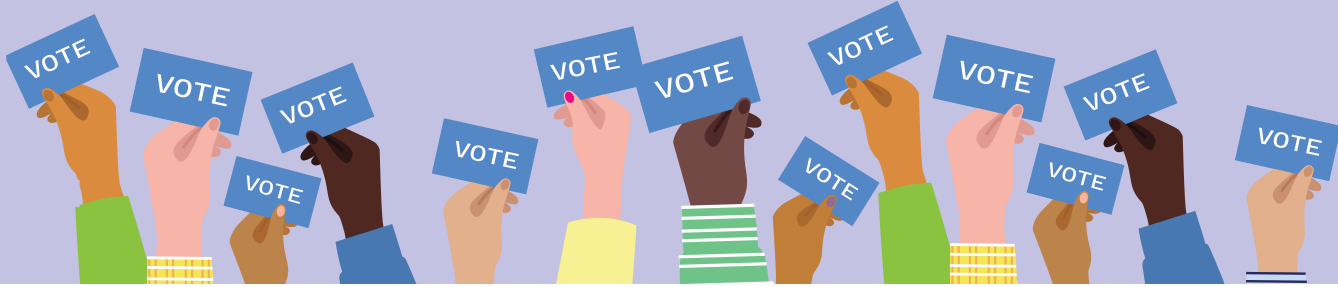


Challenging

- **Visit areas that others may ignore** with your GOTV and voter pledge initiatives, such as shelters and senior living residences.
- **Broaden outreach** with activities such as canvassing your neighborhood and obtaining lists to text or phone nonpartisan Election Day reminders.

“The Church that confesses Christ in public demonstrates its commitment through involvement in public life—globally and locally, nationally and in neighborhoods...Participation in public life is essential to doing justice and undoing injustice.”

— ELCA social statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture* (p. 6)



Faithful Presence

Stewardship is more than finances — stewardship is about love. It is how we use our time, talents and treasures to love God and serve our neighbors, both within the church and in the wider world.

In an election season, there are many ways we can be good stewards. It takes the work of many to make the process work. Sadly, such engagement can come with risks as well as rewards. Fears and harassment can surface. Showing up as people of faith during an election can bolster public confidence and encourage civic celebration.



Beginning

SHOWING HOSPITALITY

Checking local regulations will play a role in shaping activity, and remaining strictly non-partisan is a given, but across the ELCA congregations have come up with great ideas for this pivotal time to be one of community enrichment and celebration.

- **Organize rides or childcare** to help neighbors participate. Rural areas are especially susceptible to transportation challenges.
- **Offer water, coffee or snacks to those awaiting entry** to their polling location.
- **Thank election day workers** with snacks and water.



Ready for More

TAKING PAID AND VOLUNTEER ROLES

- **Poll Workers** – Poll worker shortages present challenges, as older workers may retire from the role and issues such as inadequate pay, harassment and partisan balance requirements need to be considered before stepping into the work. Yet the service is critical and can be very



A Blessing for Poll Workers

May God bless you in your service to the public.

May you be a faithful steward of the trust placed in you, helping to uphold the dignity of every voter and the flourishing of our democratic life.

May your service be marked by a spirit of hospitality and respect toward every person who enters your polling place and ensuring that every process is carried out with integrity.

May God grant you wisdom for every decision, patience for every encounter, and strength for every task.

And may you leave this service with the deep assurance that your efforts have contributed to the common good, strengthening your community through faithful civic engagement. Go in peace, with courage and hope, to serve your neighbors and the nation. Amen.

enriching! Most positions require training and are part-time, temporary employment active during early voting and on Election Day. Explore training, deadlines and more for your locality from the Lookup Tool of the U.S. Election Assistance Commission at EAC.gov/help-america-vote.

- **Poll Watchers or Election Observers** – Persons in this role observe and monitor an election without violating voter privacy or disrupting the election, and play a role in election transparency throughout the nation. The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) produced a [brief video](#) describing Poll Workers and Poll Watchers, and offers some direction for exploring state-specific qualifications and training at NCLS.org/elections-and-campaigns/poll-watchers-and-challengers.
- **Poll Chaplains** – With training offered from various sources, rostered ministers alongside interfaith partners in this role at polling places demonstrate a calm, visible community presence to the right to vote.



Challenging

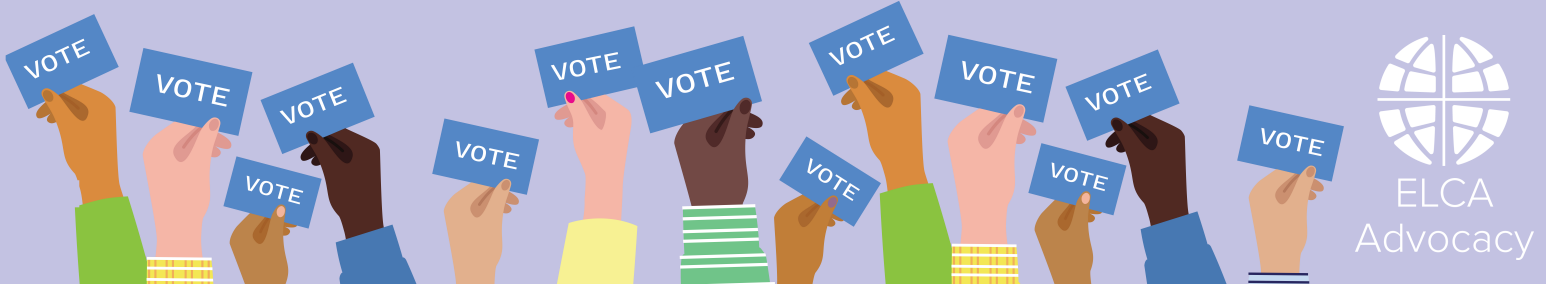
- **Polling Place** – Making a congregation’s building available as a Polling Place can nurture an enlivening community connection. Some legal and logistic considerations are found in the ELCA’s [“Churches as Polling Places”](#) resource. A local county Board of Elections can assist with next steps toward designation.

“I love that this is something we do with and for our neighbors... Having a volunteer present introduces our congregation to people who may not have interacted with us before, and it creates a welcoming and collaborative environment for voters and election workers. We may only have the power to smile and offer snacks, but we are happy to do what we can to make the voting process the best it can.”

—Autumn, posted to [“LAMA at the Polls”](#) by Lutheran Advocacy Ministry Arizona (March 2024)

“From the beginning, the Scriptures depict the human vocation as a shared activity in tending gardens, tilling soil, and building communities. These activities require cooperation, conversation, and social coordination. This church celebrates that God creates human beings as relational beings who live in social and political communities.”

— From ELCA social statement [Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All](#) (p. 89)



Election Protection

While voting can be a meaningful celebration of exercising our rights and an opportunity to have a voice in building our free society, the experience at polling locations does not always feel that way for everyone. At times, the atmosphere can be marked by tension or uncertainty, and elections can stir a wide range of emotions as people approach them with hope, concern or even anxiety. In some cases, this sense of unease may be intensified by the visible or rumored presence of government agencies unrelated to the election process at polling locations, such as the National Guard, police or immigration enforcement, which can leave individuals feeling vulnerable rather than at ease.

Every eligible voter deserves to feel safe, respected and able to participate in elections with confidence. Here are some ideas for helping your community stay safe and aware during election season.



Beginning

- **Bring your phone to the polling place.** Placing a phone call for assistance or recording a troubling exchange can be a service.
- **Save the Election Protection Hotline number — 1-866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683) — to your contact list.** Staff of the **national, nonpartisan Election Protection coalition** are trained to answer voting-related questions. Multilingual assistance is available in Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, Hindi, Korean, Mandarin, Punjabi, Tagalog, Urdu, Vietnamese and Spanish.
- **Problems at the polls? The 866-OUR-VOTE hotline can assist** and give counties and the state help to find solutions to common voting issues, from language assistance needs to misunderstandings of election rules by poll workers.

ELECTION PROTECTION **866 OUR VOTE**

ENGLISH	866-OUR-VOTE 866-687-8683
SPANISH	888-VE-Y-VOTA 888-839-8682
ASIAN LANGUAGES BENGALI, CANTONESE, HINDI, URDU, KOREAN, MANDARIN, TAGALOG, VIETNAMESE	888-API-VOTE 888-274-8683
DISABLED VOTERS NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF	888-796-VOTE 888-796-8683
ASL (VIDEO CALL)	301-818-VOTE 1-301-818-8683

If you experience or observe any voting issues, call or text the Election Protection Hotline

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

866 OUR VOTE



Ready for More

- **Active Bystander Intervention and De-Escalation Training** can prepare people to help diffuse harmful or inappropriate behavior such as bullying, harassment and physical violence.
- **Virtual and in-person training is available**, for example with the [DC Peace Team](#). Advocacy based on faith priorities when policy proposals inhibit voting access matters. The [ELCA-affiliated State Public Policy Office network](#) and ELCA synod teams may be coordinating efforts in your area; sign up for the ELCA Advocacy Network for federal opportunities at [ELCA.org/advocacy/signup](https://elca.org/advocacy/signup).
- A [compilation of “De-escalation Resources”](#) for maintaining safety, calm and integrity during community engagement, although compiled for an earlier event, is available from the Interfaith Alliance.



Challenging

- Before, during and after an election, **relationships with election officials can strengthen the voice of trusted messengers in the faith community**. Learn more in “Cultivating Relationships with Local Election Officials,” available in the ELCA Resource Center.
- **Consider connecting with nonpartisan coalitions** in your locality, which emphasize free, fair, credible and accessible elections. Project Halo found common purpose with a coalition of veterans, Lutheran leaders, legal professionals and communities, for example. Explore its plans to celebrate elections before and on Election Day, accompany voters who may feel insecure voting, and train to bear witness to intimidation and interference at halovote.org.

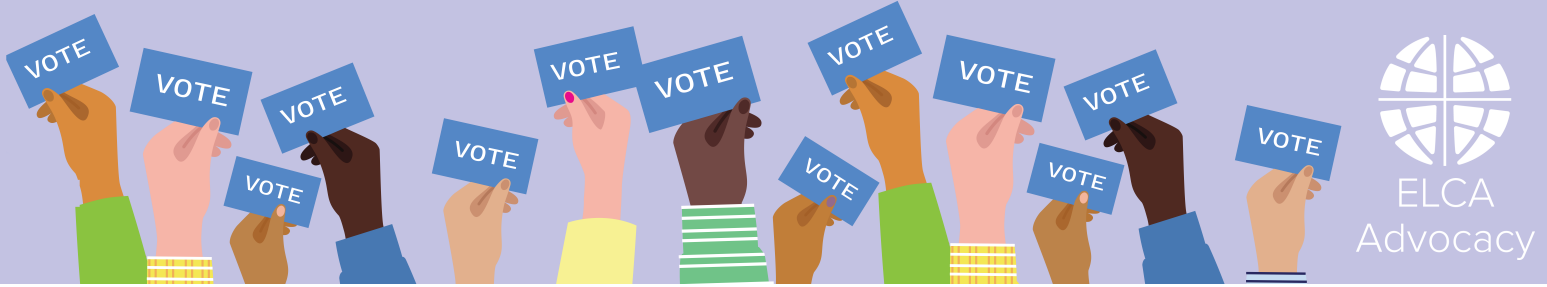


“As a faith leader, I feel like part of my calling is to be a presence for peace in my community,” said Deacon David Hope-Tringali. “With all of the rhetoric and violence that’s been around in politics lately, I think being able to show up with these spaces and create a welcoming presence and advocate [participation] is one way I can help sow seeds of peace in the community.”

—Project HALO experience
shared by Lutheran Advocacy
Ministry in Pennsylvania

“The political health of our nation still suffers from the stain of antidemocratic exclusion. Efforts to restrict access to voting should be condemned and resisted...Active suppression robs voters of a key means of participation.”

— ELCA social message [“Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy”](#) (p. 10)



Trusted Messengers in Confusing Times

False information is a continual challenge during the election season, often spreading quickly and having an eroding impact. “[Election misinformation] menaces election officials, with 64% reporting in 2022 that the spread of false information has made their jobs more dangerous. It interferes with voters’ ability to understand and participate in political processes. And it has been weaponized by lawmakers to justify new voter suppression legislation,” states a [Brennan Center for Justice](#) project.

Our churches and faith leaders can help counter the erosion. Acting as trustworthy messengers is an opportunity for service as Christians active in civic engagement.



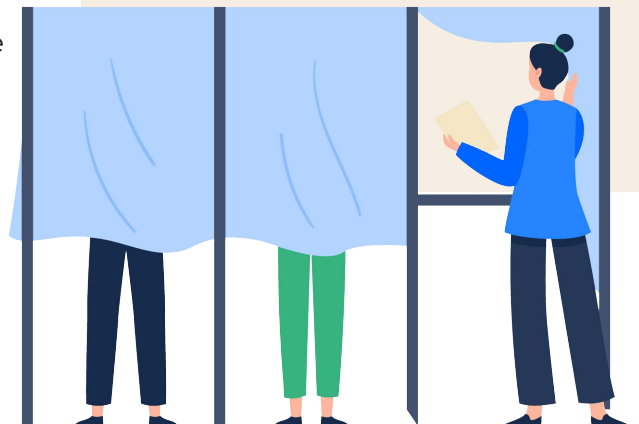
Beginning

- Matthew 7:3 is a good place to start. **We can all be tripped up when encountering misinformation (facts are wrong) and disinformation (intended to mislead).**
- Applying **time-tested fact-checking practices** in an age of [Artificial Intelligence \(AI\)-generated election information](#) is the topic of a Brennan Center for Justice explainer, which can help us brush up on the amped-up risk.
- The United Church of Christ has refreshed a **workshop curriculum called “[Know Peace Online.](#)”** Suggestions include checking facts with more than an AI inquiry, talking directly with people who share misinformation so they aren’t shamed, and being aware that the phrase “fake news” is no longer helpful as it tends to be used to express disagreement with an opinion rather than identification of incorrect facts.

...I had the opportunity to observe the Montgomery County Board of Elections conduct one of the most crucial behind-the-scenes processes in any election: the public testing of election systems...

This is not just about attending an event; it’s about ensuring that voters can feel confident in the election process. By witnessing the testing first-hand, we can give a credible, first-person account that reassures people in our communities that their votes will be counted accurately.”

—Guthrie Graves-Fitzsimmons
of [Interfaith Alliance](#)



- Conversely, **sharing accurate information is a way to positively contribute**. Written for election officials, a list of [prominent mis/disinformation topics in public conversation](#) reminds the faith community of the value of sharing even basic local facts like the day and date of Election Day. Don't forget to display your "[Prepared to Vote Checklist](#)"!



Ready for More

- Being part of a group which is **cultivating relationships** with local election officials is both an action of support and **an opportunity to be trusted community witnesses to the mechanisms of fair, accessible and trustworthy elections**. While roles vary from state to state, these officials often are responsible for certifying election results, testing voting equipment, providing guidance and support to local election officials, maintaining voter rolls and ensuring eligible voters are able to cast a ballot that is counted. "Cultivating Relationships with Local Election Officials" in the ELCA Resource Center can help you make a connection of service with others before, during and after an election.

"How do we make our online world look more like the world we pray for? How do we make the Internet resemble God's vision of shalom?"

—Know Peace Online Workshop Curriculum," United Church of Christ (July 2025)

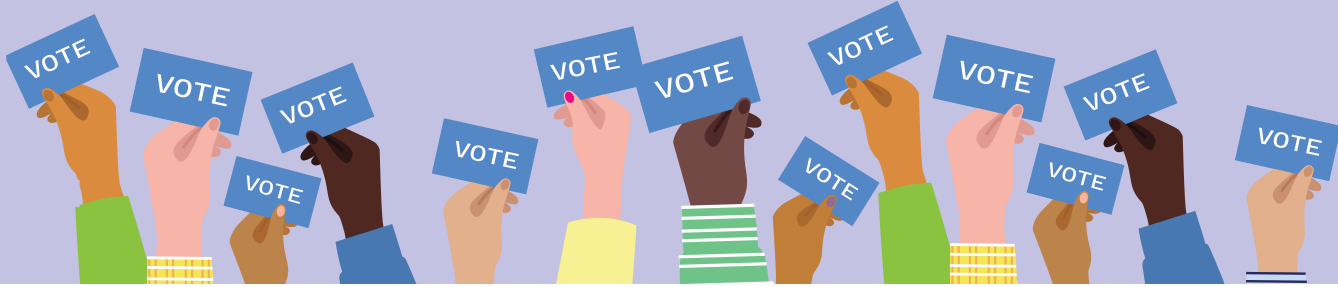


Challenging

- Conducting a **candidate forum** is a first-person encounter that connects congregations and their members with the local community, the broader faith community and the electoral process. See "[Being a Public Church in the Electoral Process](#)" for reflection on the nonpartisan commitment of such an event and find a tipsheet for planning candidate forums in the [ELCA Civic Engagement Guide](#).

"Healthy civic engagement depends on clear distinctions between fact and all forms of falsehood, ranging from partial misstatements to intentional disinformation to outright lies...Our church, then, encourages us all to ask, in every personal interaction and on social media, whether our words or those we repeat represent the best possible understanding of our neighbor."

— ELCA social statement *Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All* (p. 62)



Election Day Witness



“As people of faith, we know that we are held in God’s hands. We are a community in Christ, and we as baptized and sent children of God are called to show God’s love in the world through prayer and action” said Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee, ELCA Northwest Washington Synod, in an Election Prayer Vigil invitation video noting that divisiveness and hate speech make it easy to be discouraged. “As we vote and as we wait for election results, may we not be fearful, may we not speak hate, may we love and serve one another in Christ’s name.”

—@LutheransNW Instagram post
(October 24, 2024)

Bringing the community together as people of faith is a powerful way to demonstrate our witness in society on Election Day and after.

“A congregation can be one of the few places where people with differing political view[s] still come together,” observes a piece from the [Lewis Center for Church Leadership](#). While elections can be a time of enlivened community visioning, there are other reactions as well. People may appreciate a reminder to see their fears and anxieties in the larger context of God’s enduring promises. “The way we model loving our neighbor can leave a lasting impression in a polarized community,” the post continues. “[Amid election day uncertainties], God is still among us, and Christ still calls us to follow him across turbulent water.”



Beginning

- With such options as in-person gatherings, hourly Instagram posts or virtual events, **a prayer vigil, sing-along or other contemplative opportunity can be an important witness and service to one another** on or around Election Day. ELCA Worship has available [“Worship Resources for a National Election.”](#) A multidenomination [Vote Faithfully tool kit](#) also includes “Prayers of the People for an Election.”
- Explore expanding the witness by organizing or **taking part in prayer services or vigils with ecumenical or other collaborators.**



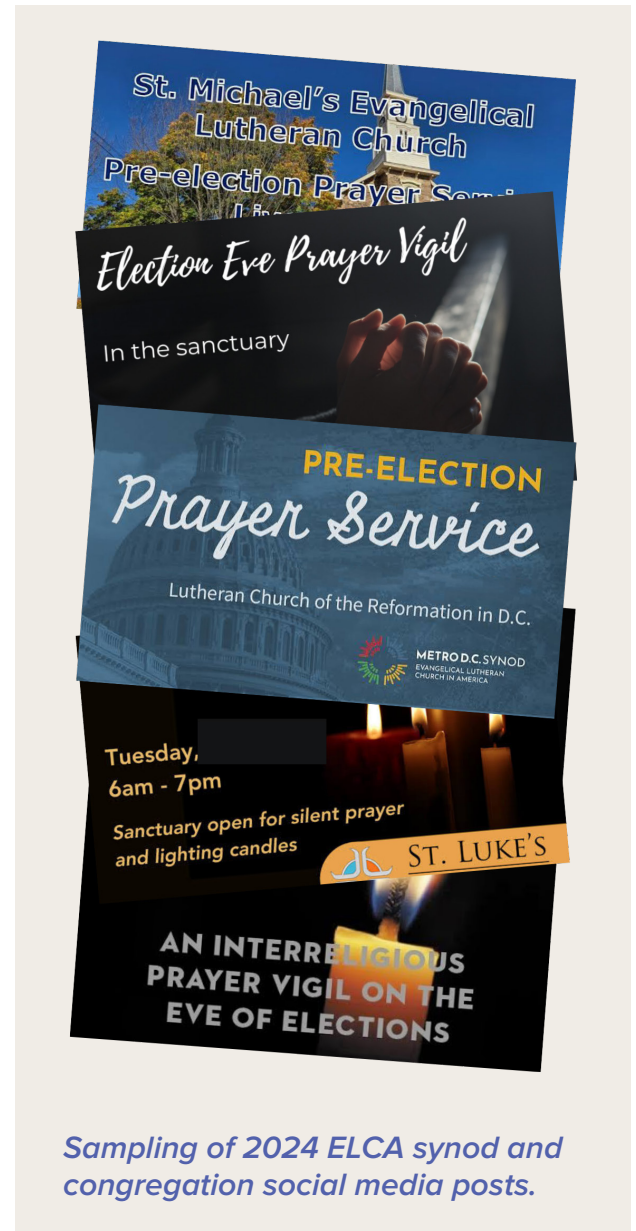
Ready for More

- **Follow through on your hospitality** or other nonpartisan support to **assist voters with getting to the polls!**
- With advance planning, a **craftivism project** may come to fruition as a creative demonstration of resolution and care. This can be a peaceful and affirming practice, and the results can be displayed to touch hearts with art. Instructions in the ELCA Resource Center describe Crafting as Activism, an activity based on the “Quilting God’s Dream for Our Nation” project shared during the 2026 Women of the ELCA Triennial.



Challenging

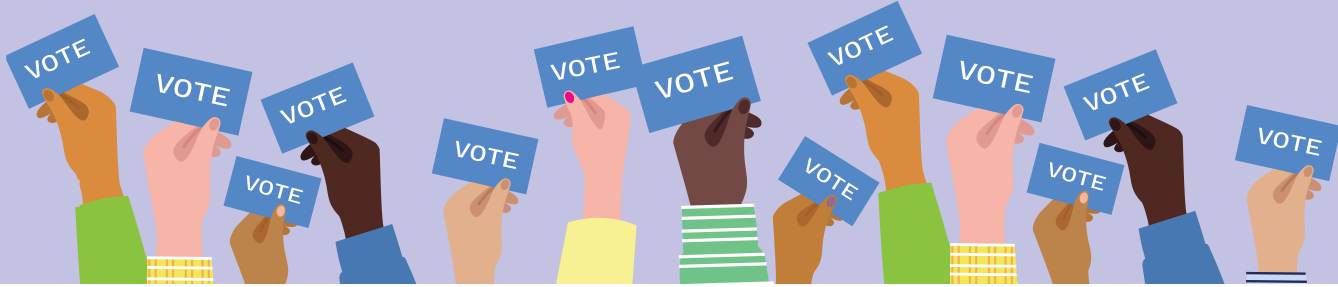
- **Think about after Election Day as well.** Connections your congregation has made, for example by previous outreach to election officials, will continue to strengthen community through our capacity to be steadfast, trusted messengers in times of mis/disinformation and change.



Sampling of 2024 ELCA synod and congregation social media posts.

“This church bears witness to God’s purpose and power in the world. We teach that human civic activity and political power are sustained by divine power and can be evaluated ethically by God’s intention that humans use, increase, and share such power so that human structures and systems serve the well-being of all with good order and justice.”

— ELCA social statement *Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All* (p. 12)



But What About...

Great ideas from many sources can stimulate your engagement as people of faith in an election season.

Here is a sampling of resources that may energize you:

- [**Faith in Elections Playbook**](#) from Interfaith America
- Snack-sized [**Civics videos**](#) from the League of Women Voters of Detroit Lakes Area, on TV3 Lakes Area Television YouTube channel
- U.S. Election Assistance Commission [**Social Media Toolkit**](#) — sharable social media selections from sources such as Facebook.com/watch/?v=2409062376221503
- [**Rock the Vote**](#) nonpartisan resources “dedicated to building the political power of young people”

An invitation:

When you share your election engagement activity on social media, please tag @ELCAadvocacy for mutual awareness and amplification!

We can encourage one another.



“Elections matter because they shape the conditions under which our neighbors live — conditions that affect housing, creation care, immigration, economic opportunity, community safety and more. These are not abstract political issues for Christians; they are expressions of our call to love God and love neighbor. Civic participation is public discipleship and a way to love our neighbor in public.

“In a time marked by polarization and mistrust, participating in elections can feel challenging. Yet Lutheran social teaching encourages us to approach civic life with humility, hope and a commitment to the dignity of every neighbor. This includes seeking and sharing truthful information, listening deeply to differing perspectives and supporting electoral processes that are fair and accessible.”

—The Rev. Amy E. Reumann, senior director, ELCA Witness in Society

“Our church affirms the Lutheran teaching that anyone who seeks the community’s well-being through civic participation is, knowingly or not, using the capacities God provides.”

— Social statement [***Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All***](#) (p. 21)



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