



Our Faith Our Vote

October 18, 2020 – Next steps – Our Faith in Action

Opening Prayer: Creator God, We have spoken about your word, your world, and your call for us to use our voice and our vote in prophetic ways. We have hard



times ahead of us as a nation, but we have you and each other for support and courage. Today let us commit to being open and honest with ourselves and others as we seek to use the power of wisdom and love to bring justice and light to your world. May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable to you O God, our strength and our redeemer. Amen

- Share Bonnie's email
- We have discussed the tools we need to speak with respect and openness. Now we need to practice what we've learned without staying safely in the academic. Each person will have 90 seconds to share what values are important to their vote this year and what they hope their vote will accomplish in keeping with God's call for us to...do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God. (use back for notes)
- Q&A for each other. (listening is the most important part of Q&A)
- Let's discuss the elephant in the room – FEAR. Of what are you afraid in this election season?
- Knowledge is Power - Educate ourselves – read the Constitution! Stay up on the news, and research where your news stories are coming from – NPR is most likely the least biased in the US and will have more cogent and vetted details than many sources. Other trustworthy sources which do factchecking are the NYTimes, the Washington Post, The Hill (online), the Associated Press, others? Do we look for bias in journalism? Do we look for propaganda in ads, websites and opinion pieces? When does "bias" in reporting become a product of our own blinders and filters? How do we know the "truth"?
- Resources for hope and reclaiming our rights as children of God – how do we move forward? GOTV? Local cooperation in building our communities? Working with our youth? JPANet? More classes and discussions at Grace?

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King said: "Courage is the power of the mind to overcome fear." "Our lives begin to end the day we are silent on things that matter." "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

- Closing litany of commitment – Rev. Noelle Damico – UCC – Our Faith Our Vote

Litany of Commitment by the Rev. Noelle Damico (NYU)

Leader: Then let us covenant anew to be faithful followers of God. With what shall we come before the Lord?

People: Shall we come with burnt offerings?

Leader: Will God be pleased with sacrifices?

People: Shall we give our firstborn for our sins?

Leader: God has told you, O Mortal, what is good.

People: What does the Lord require but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with our God?

Leader: God, we are excited and emboldened on this day of commitment.

People: We long to serve and strengthen those who are suffering.

Leader: In this world of injustice, violence and hate, it is easy to become apathetic.

People: But we refuse to pretend that we can do nothing to change the “way things are.”

Leader: We know sometimes change takes a long time.

People: We are prepared to keep walking with you and those in need as together we live in a new way that reflects your intention for creation.

Leader: We yearn to know you more completely, God.

People: May this journey of service, advocacy, and worship form us anew in your image.

Leader: Inhabit our sanctuary and our streets with your presence.

People: Inhabit our hearts and our actions [and our votes] with your compassion.

Leader: Through prayer and song, study and work, we seek always to grow closer to you by growing closer to one another.

People: May our worship and our work be one, proclaiming your justice, mercy, and faithful presence in this world.

AMEN!

RESOURCES for upholding our democracy:

- https://www.ucc.org/ourfaithourvote_election-protection from the UCC – With so much at stake in November it is deeply troubling that such a fundamental part of the democratic process, the right to cast one's vote and to have that vote counted, is increasingly in question. But we can make a difference and take action to strengthen our democratic process. Now more than ever, it is critical for justice advocates to help work for fair elections and insure that the rights of all voters are protected at the polls. By participating in the nonpartisan Election Protection campaign in the days leading up to the elections and on Election Day, you can help to make it possible for the voices of the voters to be heard and counted. How? By volunteering to staff the election protection legal hotline, acting as poll monitors, volunteering to staff your local polls, and making sure everyone in your community knows who to call for help if they are prevented from casting their vote. Visit the [Election Protection website](#) for tools and resources to help insure fair elections.
- <https://sos.vermont.gov/> Vermont Secretary of State: information and laws about voting, tracking your ballot, etc.
- <https://www.aclu.org/issues/voting-rights> American Civil Liberties: Union protection of voting rights – news, history, action
- <https://www.ucc.org/tags/jpanet> JPANet – see handout
- <https://www.naacp.org/latest/john-r-lewis-voting-rights-act-2020/> NAACP website – learn about the John R. Lewis voting rights act of 2020 and sign up for action alerts
- castletonindivisible@gmail.com Castleton Indivisible – contact them to sign up for informative emails and local peaceful actions surrounding the elections. They have leaders trained in non-violence and thoughtful/respectful engagement.