

Worship Resources for Voters on Election Day

Prayers for Election Day and Justice for Immigrants:

God of the Journey, God of the Traveler

Zechariah 7:9-10 - "Thus says the Lord of hosts, Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another, do not oppress the widow, the fatherless, the sojourner, or the poor, and let none of you devise evil against another in your heart."

We pray for those who leave their homes in search of new beginnings and possibilities,
May they know your presence with them.
We pray for those who seek to make their home in this country,
May they find us welcoming and willing to help them find a path towards citizenship.
We pray for our legislators as they craft new immigration legislation,
May they find the wisdom and courage to enact policies that uphold justice and dignity for newcomers and immigrants in our country and for those who would immigrate here.
We pray for those who fan the flames of fear and discrimination against the undocumented and the unaccompanied child;
May be touched with your divine compassion.

*We pray for all those casting their vote on election day;
May their decisions reflect your call to seek mercy and justice.
May we vote to show kindness and mercy to our neighbors. May we vote to express compassion to the widow and the fatherless and the poor. May our vote render hospitality and justice for the sojourner and the immigrant.*

*-The Archdiocese of Chicago, highlighted text added
Listed on the Interfaith Worker Justice website (<http://files.www.iwj.org/resources/a-prayer-for-immigrants/CollectedPrayers4Imm4.131.pdf>)*

Prayer of Invocation:

O Holy One, Source of all life and Ground of all love,
we thank you for your love that never lets us go.
Thank you for the privilege of gathering in this space
with these your people – our neighbors – to worship you.
We do not come merely to open the doors of the church,
but we come that our hearts might be opened to you and to one another.
As we worship you today, help us to respond to the call of love
– to love you, our neighbors, and ourselves.
May we be transformed from individuals to members of your one body.
We pray for our nation that we be united as a people tied to a single garment of destiny.
We pray for those who we elect to serve all citizens
that they may be guided not by ego, politics or money,
but by compassion for all people.
Guide us as families, as a community of faith, as a nation
to follow the path of love. **Amen.**

-Local Church Ministries, Congregational Vitality and Discipleship Ministry Team, United Church of Christ-Our Faith Our Vote (<http://www.ucc.org/ourfaithourvote/worship-resources.html>)

Prayer of Confession:

Again and again you call us to care for widows and orphans,
to advocate for those in prison,
to welcome the strangers.

**God, we hear your call,
but all around us we hear the cry
that there is not enough for all, and that some are undeserving.**

Again and again you call us to love you with our whole heart, understanding, and strength;
such love demands that we seek justice
for those who are oppressed, poor, and forgotten.

**God, we hear your call,
but all around us are competing calls of worldly loyalties,
political parties, and public acclaim.**

Again and again, you urge us to seek you first.
We long to trust the path of love for you and our neighbors as ourselves.

**Yet we fear that our “land of milk and honey”
has become a land of moral famine and economic hardship,
and we wonder at times if you have abandoned us.**

Again and again throughout this election season,
we have seen the divisions in this nation become great.

At times, we have been more inclined to debate than pray.

Again and again you urge us not to lean on our own understanding
but in all our ways to acknowledge you,
and yet we are often distracted by the clamor of fear dressed up as reason.

As we prepare our hearts and minds for the upcoming elections,
at times we forget to observe
your statutes of compassion and your ordinances of justice.

**Again, you remind us to follow you so that it may go well for us,
our neighbors, our nation, and our world.**

Assurance of Pardon

Sisters and brothers, God is at work in us and with us!

We know that you are the one who lifts up those who are bowed down.

We know that you promise to uphold us, and yet,

**again and again, we get caught up in the ways of those who put their trust in politicians, power-brokers
and pundits instead of the Ruler of Peace.**

Hear the word of God for this season and all seasons:

“Do not be afraid! I will never leave you or forsake you.”

Know that our God who began a good work in us is able to complete it.

As we open ourselves to the Spirit of God,

may we see more fully the wonder of God already at work in us.

And so it is. Amen.

-Local Church Ministries, Congregational Vitality and Discipleship Ministry Team, United Church of Christ-Our Faith Our Vote (<http://www.ucc.org/ourfaithourvote/worship-resources.html>) .

Guiding Questions to Ask about Candidates When Voting

Questions to consider of candidates regarding immigration policies

1. What do the candidates say about the DREAM Act (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act) also known as the KIDS Act in the House of Representatives?
2. What do the candidates think about comprehensive immigration reform? What has been their position on the Senate's (S. 744) and House's (H.R. 15) proposed comprehensive immigration reform legislation? Do they favor an earned pathway to citizenship and family unity in any version of immigration reform?
3. Where do the candidates stand on President Obama's record mass deportations? Do they support enforcement policies that have led to 2 million deportations, such as: the federal mandate to fill 34,000 immigration detention beds daily or the Secure Community Program and the 287(g) program that deputize state and local law enforcement to act as federal immigration agents?
4. What do the candidates say about the root causes of immigration? Do they support foreign policies that militarily or economically destabilize the countries of origins for many migrant populations? Do they favor free trade agreements, such as the North American Free Trade Act or the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which tend to create conditions of poverty from which immigrants flee? Do they support militarizing Latin America through the School of the Americas, also known as WHINSEC?
5. How do the candidates challenge anti-immigrant rhetoric?
6. What are the candidates' positions concerning the states passing their own immigration laws?

-*Sisters of Mercy U.S. Elections 2014 resource*

(<http://www.sistersofmercy.org/files/documents/resources/Justice/ElectionGuide2014.pdf>)

Additional Resources:

CWS Civic Engagement Toolkit. In addition to providing ways to engage the faith community in elections, it includes compilations of different faith sermon starters on civic engagement and immigration. It also includes a compilation of faith-based statements on immigration reform. (<http://www.interfaithimmigration.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/2012-CWS-Toolkit-Final-1.pdf>)

Interfaith Worker Justice: IWJ works to mobilize people of faith to advocate for economic justice and workers' rights. Their resource page is full of prayers and verses from multiple Holy Texts—including the Holy Qu'ran, the Hebrew Bible, and the Christian Bible—to support welcoming immigrants. (<http://www.iwj.org/resources>)

United Church of Christ, Our Faith Our Vote: UCC provides worship resources for congregations to bring together faith and the political sphere. They offer a toolkit and other resources: (<http://www.ucc.org/ourfaithourvote/our-faith-our-vote-downloads.html> & <http://www.ucc.org/ourfaithourvote/worship-resources.html>)

Sisters of Mercy U.S. 2014 Election Guide: This is a great resource for people of faith to use in helping to navigate decisions about how to cast votes on Election Day. (<http://www.sistersofmercy.org/files/documents/resources/Justice/ElectionGuide2014.pdf>)

Interfaith Immigration Coalition: SOULS TO THE POLLS Resource, IIC's Initiative to get out the vote. This resource shares information and resources uplifting the importance for people of faith to vote, coordinating prayer vigils, and more to help organize people of faith around voting. (<http://www.interfaithimmigration.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/IIC-Souls-to-the-Polls.pdf>)

NETWORK: Nuns on the Bus: In addition to the Nuns on the Bus tour events, NETWORK, a National Catholic Social Justice Lobby, offers a variety of resources to help mobilize voters and protect the rights of immigrants. (<http://www.networklobby.org/bus2014>)