



October 25, 2020

## Lift Every Voice

*'Shout out, do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet!' - Isaiah 58:1*

In Hebrew Scripture the word most often translated "voice" is "qol." This is also the word translated as noise, or sound, or vote. In a broader sense, I would say the Hebrew word, qol, simply means letting oneself be heard. Using our voice to make a sound is certainly one way to be heard, and using our vote is another.

Our vote is the means we have to make an impactful noise about the local, state and national issues that concern us. Voting is a powerful tool, and this is why we see so many focused efforts targeted at voter disenfranchisement. This is why districts are redrawn and political parties engage in gerrymandering. This is why voting rights legislation and access to the polls is constantly being challenged.

### So as people of faith, what is the noise we want to make in this election cycle?

What are the sounds of affirmation or dissent that must resound loudly through this election cycle for school board members, state representatives, for mayoral and gubernatorial elections? What are the sounds of the faithful that must ring through the halls of Congress signaling our desire for change?

No matter your opinion or political affiliation, your voice - your vote - matters and you deserve to be heard.

This is why it is critical for faith communities to engage in nonpartisan voter registration, education and empowerment programs to help us make some holy noise by lifting up the common good through our political process.

These are difficult, complex and challenging times. There is much at stake as we head to the voting booths this November. An unprecedented level of divisive and heated rhetoric dominates the airwaves and public dialogue. A substantive, thoughtful, respectful exchange of across differences on the key issues of the day is becoming harder to achieve. And the disproportionate influence of money in campaigns threatens to drown out the voice of the average voter.



This is precisely why our voice and our votes matter. Churches can play a unique role in this election cycle by encouraging respectful, informed dialogue that builds community and a hope-filled vision of the future that includes all people. We can help restore the soul of democracy.

The UCC Our Faith Our Vote toolkit provides information and ideas to assist individuals and congregations with engaging the electoral process in nonpartisan and meaningful ways. We must equip ourselves, and our communities, to make thoughtful, informed decisions about those who will lead us in the future. The Our Faith Our Vote campaign is one way to help us lift up our voice. I hope you will join us in this effort.

- Rev. Traci D. Blackmon

Associate General Minister of Justice & Local Church Ministries for The United Church of Christ

Note: For more information on the UCC Our Faith Our Vote toolkit, go to: <https://www.ucc.org/ourfaithourvote>



**Register NOW for the PSEC Fall Meeting!**



**Via Zoom**

**November 15th**

**3:00 pm—5:00 pm**

*There is no fee for this meeting!*

**Register at: <https://psec2020fall.eventbrite.com>**