



# *FAITH* VOTER TOOLKIT

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**SERMON BY  
REV. DR. MONICA SPENCER**

## **WHY ARE FAITH INSTITUTIONS IMPORTANT?**

- Faith Leaders are trusted community members whose leadership will be essential to reaching and engaging the community.
- Faith Leaders in urban, suburban, and rural communities minister to, interact with, and mobilize many of the hardest to reach communities on a daily basis, so your voice and continued encouragement can increase participation and understanding during this season of voting.
- By engaging your members, you have the opportunity to encourage them to reach out to their family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers to help them make a plan to vote early!



## FOREWORD

Our democracy is built on three pillars: census, redistricting, and voting, with the census at its core. An inaccurate census count weakens every other aspect of our democracy, as the erroneous data renders inaccurate maps during the redistricting process, inevitably threatening the voting power of the people most often left out. Any attempts to suppress that power should be seen as an attack on our rights.

On November 8, 2021, 365 days before the November General Election, Fair Count launched Vote-365, our MOST AMBITIOUS effort yet. The best way we, as organizers, can strengthen democracy is to overwhelm it with participation, and we are organizing deep throughout rural Georgia to ensure that everyone can vote this fall. As such, we are consistently guided by the joy, satisfaction, and inherent right of voting. We have seen every indication that GA voters are ready to participate and have their voices heard. In fact, we believe they are ready to fight to be heard.

Right now, voters in Georgia need your help! Arguably, no great organizing movement has happened within the fight for civil rights without voices of faith. As a Faith Leader, you have a unique opportunity to impact change amongst voters in your congregation and the communities that you serve. Your leadership and strong local ties give you the ability to dispel inaccurate election information within the community and mobilize voters.

As leaders prepare for this critical moment, we offer this toolkit as another resource in the broader toolbox that we offer to help Georgia voters prepare for the 2022 Midterm Election. You'll find key dates, contacts, FAQs, scriptures, and bulletin inserts. We hope that you find it helpful to share with others.

Remember, you are a vital component of the efforts to ensure that EVERYONE is fairly represented! We hope that you join us to organize and strengthen the engagement of people of faith across Georgia. It is necessary that you stay engaged as a moral voice throughout this voting season.



# GET INVOLVED

## WHAT IS YOUR PLAN TO VOTE?

### FAQ:

#### How should I help my congregation and community to prepare for the 2022 Midterm Election?

- Designate a committee(or person) to work with Fair Count and ensure that everyone has the resources that they need to vote this year (proper identification, knowledge of key dates, etc.)
- Make it a priority to know the voting status of your congregants AND the surrounding community (one mile radius around your faith institution).
- Encourage members and others to *Make a Plan to Vote*.
- Encourage everyone to regularly check their *My Voter Page* for registration status, absentee vote by mail ballot status, early in-person voting locations and status, Election Day precinct.
- Develop a messaging plan including weekly announcements and bulletins, emails, text messages, phone trees, and social media.
- Monitor and *respond* to election concerns shared by your congregation and community.
- Share the *Election Protection Hotline* information.
- Make plans and set a *few dates* for your congregation and community to vote together during the early in-person voting period and on Election Day.
- Remind any provisional ballot voters in your congregation and community to contact the local registrar and inquire about curing their ballot. For Election Day, regular provisional ballots must be cured by November 11.
- Prepare registered voters of a possible runoff on December 6. During the runoff election period, the absentee ballot request period and the early in-person voting period are shorter. For the runoff, regular provisional ballots must be cured by December 9.
- Contact the Fair Count Faith team for assistance with literature, training, and other resources.

#### How do I create a rapid response messaging system?

During the Midterm Election, you will need a messaging system to share voting information including ID requirements, information websites and literature, your county's precinct information for early in-person voting, absentee ballot resources, and other resources and updates for Election Day. Your messaging system might include a calling tree with volunteer members agreeing to contact at least three others. You might also consider sharing information via social media, church management software, or a robocall, email, or texting system - whatever works for you and your community. *Contact* the Fair Count Faith Team for assistance with setting up your messaging system and for election resources such as literature, presentations, voter forums, and other events.

## What are other ways for my faith based organization to get involved?

- Make a commitment to keep your members informed about the 2022 Midterm Elections.
- Become an Elections Resource Hub for your church and community.
- Share information during all services and events via bulletin inserts, worship screens, and during announcements.
- Share information on social media accounts and engage followers.
- Encourage other Faith leaders to become involved, especially leaders of neighboring faith institutions.
- Announce a call to action for each of your members to take **four** actions:

- Commit to Vote**

Sign up to [commit to vote](#) and encourage others to make their voice count in the Midterms.

- Make a plan to vote**

Be intentional about voting by making a plan to vote. Ask yourself the following questions:

Have you checked your [voter registration](#)?

How are you planning to vote?

- Absentee mail-in ballot
- Absentee in-person (sometimes called early or advance voting)
- In-person on Election Day

If you are voting in person, when will you go to vote?

Choose a date

- October 17-November 4
- November 8

Choose a time of day

- Morning
- Lunch time
- Afternoon
- Evening

Where is your [polling location or precinct](#)?

Have you [contacted](#) your county registrar's office if you require special assistance at the polls?

If you have questions, you may speak with a trained Election Protection volunteer by calling 1-866-OUR-VOTE (1-866-687-8683) or learn more by visiting [www.866ourvote.org](http://www.866ourvote.org).

- Join the Fair Count Faith Squad**

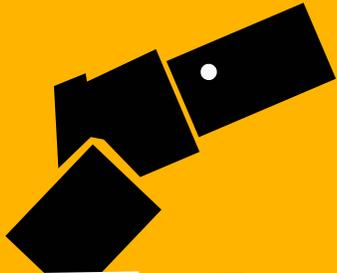
- Be a Fair Count Ambassador
- Share voting resources
- Speak on behalf of Fair Count at your place of worship
- Assist Fair Count at events
- Join Faith text banks
- Join Faith phone banks
- Participate in Faith Canvassing & Collect CTV cards

- Each week, help at least five friends commit to vote and make a plan**

Ask them these questions:

- Are they registered to vote?
- Do they know where, when, and how to vote?
- Do they need additional resources and assistance?





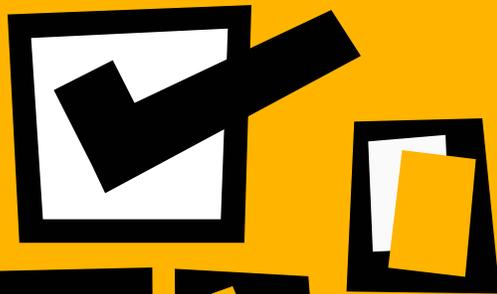
**YOUR**



**VOTE**



**YOUR**



**VOICE!**



## **ELECTION PROTECTION HOTLINE**

Find out all you need to know about midterm elections in 2022. Have questions about voter registration deadlines, requesting absentee or mail-in ballots, or how to vote in-person during early voting or on Election Day?

**1 866 OUR VOTE (1-866-687-8683) English**

**1 866 VE-Y-VOTE (1-888-687-8682) Spanish**

**1 888 API VOTE (1-888-274-8683) ASIAN LANGUAGES/ENGLISH**

**1 844 YALLA-US (1-844-925-5287) ARABIC/ENGLISH**

**TEXT: "Our Vote" to 97779**

More voter protection information about Georgia may be found [here](#).

## IMPORTANT REGISTRATION & ELECTION DATES

Remember, if you don't register to vote by the deadline, you cannot vote in that particular election.

ELECTIONS	VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE	ELECTION DATE
General Election	October 11, 2022	November 8, 2022
General Election Runoff Date	October 11, 2022	December 6, 2022

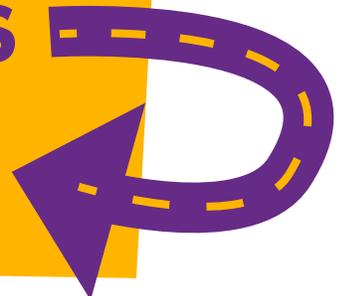
## CHECK YOUR STATUS

The most important first step of voting is making sure you're registered to vote. Check your registration status at your [My Voter page](#).

Are you registered to vote?

CHECK YOUR STATUS

[MY VOTER PAGE](#)



# VOTER IDENTIFICATION



## PHOTO ID REQUIREMENTS

Georgia law (O.C.G.A § 21-2-417) requires Georgia residents to show photo identification when voting in person.

### WHAT IDS ARE ACCEPTABLE?

Bring one of the following six forms of identification to vote:

- Any valid state or federal government-issued photo ID, including a free ID Card from your county Registrar's Office or the Georgia Department of Driver Services (DDS), and including student IDs from a public Georgia college or university
- A Georgia Driver's License (even if it's expired)
- A valid employee photo ID from any branch, department, agency, or entity of the U.S. Government, State of Georgia, or any county, municipality, board, authority, or other state entity
- A valid U.S. passport ID
- A valid U.S. military photo ID
- A valid tribal photo ID

### GEORGIA VOTER IDENTIFICATION CARD

If you do not have one of the six acceptable forms of photo ID, the State of Georgia offers a free ID Card. An ID card can be issued at any county registrar's office or Department of Driver Services Office free of charge.

### ASSISTANCE WITH ID

If you have questions, need more information or have difficulty getting a free Voter Identification Card, you may contact your county registrar's office.

Our partners at VoteRiders are also available to assist with voter ID needs and questions. To learn more about VoteRiders, visit [voteriders.org/Georgia](https://voteriders.org/Georgia). To contact VoteRiders, call or text 844-338-8743 or email [info@voteriders.org](mailto:info@voteriders.org).

# HOW TO VOTE

You may choose one of three options to vote: **Absentee**, **Early In-Person**, or **Election Day** at your polling place. Your options are described in more detail below.

## ABSENTEE VOTING

You can cast your absentee ballot for any election even if you do not plan to be absent from your county on Election Day. You may cast your vote by requesting, completing and returning an absentee ballot by mail or in a local drop box.

### FAQ:

#### How do I request an absentee ballot?

Complete the absentee ballot application. Then submit the form via mail, fax, email (as an attachment), or in-person to the registrar's office in the county where you are registered to vote.

#### How long does it take to receive my absentee ballot?

After your county registrar receives your application, the absentee ballot may be mailed to you as early as October 10. Contact your county registrar if you have not received your absentee ballot within 7 calendar days after mailing your ballot request application.

#### What if my absentee ballot never arrives?

Contact your county elections office as soon as possible. They can issue you a new one or tell you how to cancel that absentee ballot so you can vote in person.

If it's less than three weeks before Election Day, and you're able to do so, please consider voting in person. With mail delivery delays, it is unlikely that you'll receive your new ballot and be able to return it in time.

If you choose to vote in-person, let the poll worker know that you never received your absentee ballot. The poll worker will need to contact the county to have your ballot canceled. You will also have to sign an affidavit attesting to the fact that you lost or never received your ballot. This can take a little time and the poll worker may need to ask the Poll Manager for assistance, so be prepared. Once your absentee ballot has been canceled, you should be able to proceed to vote on the voting machines.

#### Can I cancel my absentee ballot and vote in person?

If you still have the absentee ballot, give it to the poll manager of your polling place, and you will be able to vote in person.

If you have not received an absentee ballot, or if your completed absentee ballot has not been received by the registrar, the poll worker will need to contact the county to have your ballot canceled. You will also have to sign an affidavit attesting to the fact that you lost or never received your ballot. This can take a little time and the poll worker may need to ask the Poll Manager for assistance, so be prepared. Once your absentee ballot has been canceled, you should be able to proceed to vote on the voting machines.

However, if the ballot has been completed and received by the county registrar, then the absentee ballot has been officially cast and cannot be canceled. No other ballot shall be issued.

#### How do I complete and return my absentee ballot?

You will receive all the forms and envelopes necessary for marking and returning your ballot. Read and follow the instructions on the package carefully, and use only black or blue ink to mark your ballot. No pencil. Ballots with incomplete voter identification information or those that are incorrectly signed are at risk of being rejected.

Once your absentee ballot is filled out and correctly signed and dated, you can return your ballot by drop box, by mail, or in person. To return your ballot in person or find information about dropbox locations you can visit or contact your county elections office.

Remember to include adequate postage if returning your absentee ballot by mail.

Regardless of how you return your absentee ballot, your completed absentee ballot must be received by the **registrar's office** in the county where you are registered to vote by the time polls close on November 8 in order to be counted.



### **What can I do if my absentee ballot is rejected?**

Contact your county elections office as soon as possible to find out why your ballot was rejected and what is required for your ballot to be counted. Hurry, you must complete this within three business days after the election date to have your ballot counted!

### **Can I submit a request for an absentee ballot for the general election and the runoff at once if I'm 65 or older and/or disabled?**

If you are 65 or older or disabled, you may (if you desire) complete one application and receive absentee ballots for the general primary, primary runoff, general, and general runoff elections.

Voters who qualify for Elderly or Disabled status need to reapply each calendar year within the 180 days prior to an Election.

A voter who has a disability or cannot read and write may get help when filling out the mail-in ballot application and the official absentee ballot.

The person helping the voter must sign an oath that is either printed on the mail-in ballot envelope or on the application for mail-in ballot, whichever is applicable.

### **May I vote in person if I miss the deadline to request my absentee ballot?**

You can still vote in person during early voting or on Election Day if you miss the deadline to request an absentee ballot.

### **What's happening with drop boxes for absentee mail-in ballots?**

Each county will have at least one drop box for absentee mail-in ballots. The drop boxes will only open when early voting is being conducted at that location, however each early in-person voting location may not have a drop box since counties are limited to the number of boxes they may provide. You do not need a stamp or any postage to return your ballot to a drop box.

### **How do I track my absentee ballot status?**

You may check your [My Voter Page](#) (MVP) to track the progress of your absentee ballot process. For additional information, contact your [county registrar's office](#).

# IN PERSON

## IN PERSON VOTING

You may choose to vote in person during the Early Voting period or on Election Day. Early voting may help you to avoid crowds or find a time to vote that is better for your schedule during the weeks prior to Election Day.

### FAQ:

#### What should I expect if I choose to vote early?

If you choose to vote during the early voting period, October 17 - November 4, you may vote at **any early voting location within the county where you are registered to vote**. You may find available early voting locations and check the status of your ballot by logging into your [My Voter Page](#).

#### What should I expect if I choose to vote on Election Day?

If you choose to vote on Election Day, November 8, you must vote at your assigned polling location. Polling locations are open from 7am to 7pm. You may find your assigned polling location on your voter registration card, by logging into your [My Voter Page](#) to view your polling location information, or by contacting your [county registrar's office](#).

#### What should I expect when I arrive at a polling location?

When you arrive at the polling location, a poll worker will check your photo ID, verify that you are registered to vote and at the correct polling location, issue you a voter access card or ballot, and you will vote. The poll worker should answer any questions you may have regarding the in-person voting process.

#### What should I do if I require special assistance?

Contact your county registrar's office if you require special assistance to vote or to access your polling location. If you need help with your ballot, you can ask a family member or friend to come with you to the polls and assist you with filling in your choices.

Georgia law requires all polling places to be fully accessible and equipped with poll workers that are trained to take care of the needs of all voters. If you are 75 years of age or older or have a disability and you show up at the polling place between 9:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., you will not be required to wait in line. Such voters should tell a poll officer if he or she wants to move to the front of the line.

#### Are polls open on Saturday or Sunday?

Designated precincts will be open for early voting on Saturday, October 22 and October 29. Some counties MAY offer Sunday voting on October 23 and October 30. You may check here for voting locations and hours.

#### How do I check my ballot status if I choose to vote early?

You may check the Absentee Ballot Portal on your [My Voter Page](#) to check the progress of your early voting process.

I heard there may be some changes to voting with a provisional ballot. Can you explain?

Yes, under the new law, any provisional ballot cast by a voter in the wrong precinct and correct county will **ONLY COUNT** if it is cast after 5 p.m. on Election Day, November 8. Voters who go to the wrong precinct before 5 p.m. will be directed to their correct precinct.

That's why it's more important than ever for voters to check their correct precinct before going to the polls on Election Day. Go to the [My Voter Page](#) and make sure you go to the correct poll so your vote will be counted.

If you must vote using a provisional ballot, please check with the poll manager before leaving to determine what you must provide to ensure your ballot is cured and counted. You are required to present documentation (ID, etc.) within three (3) days afterwards to your [County Elections Office](#) to have your vote count. This is known as "curing" your ballot. If you do not take these steps, your vote will be voided and will be thrown out.



# RESOURCE: SCRIPTURES

**Timothy 2:1-2** I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people- 2 for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

**Psalms 22:28** for dominion belongs to the Lord and he rules over the nations.

**Proverbs 14:34** Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.

**Proverbs 29:2** When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan.

**Acts 5:29** Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than human beings!

**Romans 2:11** For God shows no partiality.

**Romans 13:1** Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

**Deuteronomy 1:13** Choose for your tribes wise, understanding, and experienced men, and I will appoint them as your heads.'

**Daniel 2:20-21** "Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his. 21 He changes times and seasons; he deposes kings and raises up others. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning.

**2 Chronicles 7:14** if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

**Proverbs 31:8-9** Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly defend the rights of the poor and needy.

**James 2:1** My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.

**2 Peter 1:10** Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

**Exodus 18:21** Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

## ISLAM

"God commands justice and fair dealing..." (**Quran 16:90**)

**Surat Al-Qalam 68:1-7** You will see, and they will see, which of you is afflicted with madness. Verily, your Lord knows better, who (among men) has gone astray from His Path, and He knows better those who are guided.

# RESOURCE: BULLETIN INSERTS



MONTH	
<b>OCTOBER</b>	<p>People get ready! Our scriptures require us to root out all systems of oppression and strive for fairness in all that we do. As children of God, we must stand up for the voiceless and fight against any attempts that seek to set back our communities. Let us stand united in our efforts to <b>mobilize</b> our community to vote!</p> <p>Calling all voters! Last day to <b>register</b> to vote is October 11th! Don't forget, <b>in person early voting</b> begins October 17th!</p>
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	<p>"Aint gonna let nobody turn me 'round" For generations our people have overcome obstacles designed to stop our vote. This year will be no different. <b>November 8th is Election Day</b>. Lets show Georgia and the rest of the nation that <b>we are fired up and ready to go on Election Day!</b></p> <p>Remember to call the Voter Protection Hotline 866-OUR-VOTE, if you have any questions or concerns!</p>
<b>DECEMBER</b>	<p>Nothing like a good remix! Let's get ready to make our voices heard <b>again</b> in the December 6th Run-off Electio</p>

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

*My Voice! My Vote!* See who's on your ballot in your district.

*Vote-365* We're stronger together! Make your plan to vote and then help your friends to do the same!

*Commit to Vote* Join others with a commitment to vote!

## *The Georgia Voter Guide*

Georgia Secretary of State, *My Voter Page*

## *Census 101*

## *U.S. Religion Census 2010*

*"Rules of Redistricting: Communities of Interest."* Accessed March 2021.

## *Georgia Tech Voter Guide, SB202*

## *Voteriders*

Calhoun-Brown, Allison. *"Upon This Rock: The Black Church, Nonviolence, and the Civil Rights Movement."* PS: Political Science and Politics, vol. 33, no. 2, 2000, pp. 169–174. JSTOR, Accessed 3 Mar. 2021.

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, "Strength to Love". Beacon Press, 1963.

## *Bible Gateway*

Georgia.gov, *How Do I Vote By Absentee Ballot?*

Johnson, Gregory, The Rockefeller Foundation, *"Understanding the Census: An Inaccurate Count Will Lead to a Decade of Injustice."*

Brennan Center, *"The Impact of Voter Suppression on Communities of Color"*, Jan 10, 2022.

The Washington Informer, *"Why Voting Matters to African Americans More than Ever in 2020"*

## *Faithful Citizens, Faithful Voting*

McElroy, Robert W. Bishop, *"Voting in Faith, Rebuilding in Hope."* Diocese of San Francisco.

Paulina Napierala, *"Black Churches and Their Attitudes to the Social Protest in the Civil Rights Era: Obedience, Civil Disobedience and Black Liberation Theology"*, Migration Studies – Review of Polish Diaspora nr 2 (176)/2020,

Gilbert, Kenyatta, *"The Conversation, Hidden Figures: How Black Women Preachers Spoke Truth to Power"*

*A Matter of Faith: Prayers, Litanies, Sermon Starters, and Other Resources for Considering Voting Through the Lens of Faith.*

