

**Vote**  
**Your Values**  
**Election Toolkit**

*"We must vote. Cast your vote, not on a partisan basis, not based on your biases, but vote your values. Vote the values of human dignity and equality. Vote the values of the rock on which this country was built. Vote."*

Bishop Walter S. Thomas, Sr.

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Note: Churches, as nonprofit organizations, must follow certain guidelines when participating in elections. Churches may not campaign, openly or otherwise, for or against candidates for public office. IRS guidelines permit houses of worship to involve their members in the political process through education, voter registration, and candidate participation in town halls. The IRS also has a publication that you can use as a guide for your election engagement activities titled Tax guide for churches and religious organizations <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1828.pdf>

## Message from Our Bishop

I'm so excited to provide you this toolkit with the necessary resources to get souls to the polls this November. Whether you are voting by mail or in person, it is our hope that, with this toolkit, you will start to think about your personal voting plan now and launch your voting process today. We are only a few months away from Election Day and it is my desire that we become a 100% voting church.

People are requesting mail-in ballots in record numbers. This is happening during a time when our mail is arriving in our homes slower than ever before. You must start your plan today. We cannot be distracted by this crisis. We need you to apply early and vote early. You can plan to vote by mail. If that doesn't work, then plan to show up at the polls with your personal protective equipment on and a lunch box to wait it out! Do not be discouraged. Have a plan and work your plan. Persevere! As the Bible says: "let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."

In this challenging season, getting to the polls is not just about casting our own vote, but about working together so we all can vote and vote for values. You may want to consider picking up or delivering a neighbor's ballot to make life better for someone else. Call your local election board in advance to confirm this is allowable. Our goal is to connect to and empower every eligible voter in our congregation to vote - from 18-year olds to seniors to our returning citizens. For our seniors, we especially want you to apply for your ballots early and vote early.

As your Pastor, I believe that voting is a precious right, hard fought by heroes and heroines such as the late Congressman John Lewis, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr and Amelia Boynton. Today, we find ourselves in a time when the USPS says it cannot guarantee that all mail-in ballots will be delivered on time. Our very own late Congressman Elijah Cummings, in his time, foresaw this crisis and advocated repeatedly for the need to take

care of the postal service. How right he was! *Because of the pressures facing our post office, you must not procrastinate— get registered and apply for your ballot today!*

My brothers and sisters, voting during a pandemic is not anything new. During the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic, the US pulled off the 1918 midterms. We've been here before. God brought us through then, and he will bring us through now. Even in COVID-19, we shall overcome.

So, we are starting our voting work now. We cannot wait. *As you prepare your voting plan listen to the [song](#) "I Have A Right to Vote" - A Voting Rights Anthem by Nolan Williams, Jr.* I guarantee it will be a source of inspiration. As I close, I invite you to share this resource with your friends and family. If you have any questions or suggestions for how we can continually improve this toolkit, please do not hesitate to send them to [amen@newpsalmist.org](mailto:amen@newpsalmist.org). Remember, if we fail to plan, we plan to fail. So, plan accordingly. We're counting on you.

- Pastor

## **ELIGIBILITY**

### **You are eligible to vote in Maryland if you:**

- Are a U.S citizen
- Are a resident of Maryland
- Are at least 18 years old by Election Day

### **You are NOT eligible to vote in Maryland if:**

- You have been legally declared "mentally incompetent" by a court
- You are on parole for a felony conviction or convicted of a felony
  - You were convicted of buying or selling votes

### **You may pre-register to vote in Maryland**

- At the age of 16
- Further, under the federal Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Mail-In Voting Act, military voters and voters who live outside the U.S. can vote by mail-in ballot. Click here if you are [a military voter](#) or click here if [you live outside of the U.S.](#) to learn more about mail-in voting.
- Homeless Persons can register to vote as long as they can give you an address where they are able to receive mail. They must be able to receive a voter's card from the Board of Elections by mail.
- What about part time residents? (aka Snowbirds) Ask where they pay their taxes, where their car and driver's license list as their address. That is where they should register.
- The Unaffiliated and Declines (Independents) can only vote in the General Election.
- What are the recognized parties in the State of Maryland? Democrat, Republican and Bread and Roses. A person can change their affiliation. Party Affiliation Deadline is now the same day as voter registration deadline.
- If I do not vote in the primary they can vote in the general election. Yes I can
- "I'm not sure when I last voted, am I still registered?" People usually think they've voted more recently then they have. Any doubts register them. If they are registered we will mark them as a duplicate registration.

- "I want to register but I'm in a hurry." Give them the form to fill out and drop in the mail. If it's an election year inform them of the registration deadline.
- "I may be out of town for the election, how do I Vote?" A person can go to an Early Voting site or if they wish to cast an absentee ballot. Call 1-800-222-VOTE for out of state and your county

## **DEADLINES**

### **What is the deadline to register to vote?**

- Click here for [Maryland Election Dates & Deadlines](#) or call 202-719-9910

The deadline depends on how you want to receive your ballot. Your request must be received (not just mailed) by:

- Tuesday, October 27, 2020, if you want to receive your ballot by mail or fax.
- Friday, October 30, 2020, if you want to download your ballot from the State's website.

For the 2020 General Election only:

If you hand deliver your request for a mail-in ballot to the board of elections and the ballots are ready, you may pick up your ballot. You may then take your mail-in ballot with you and return it by mail, or you can take it to your local board office and give it to an election official. Please visit your [local board of elections' website](#) for instructions and hours of operation.

If you miss the deadline but still want to vote by mail-in ballot, you or your agent must apply in person at your [local board of elections](#).

### **When does early voting begin and end?**

- Click here for [Early Voting](#) information or call 410-269-2840 or 1-800-222-8683

The dates for Early Voting are Oct 22, 2020 - Oct 29, 2020

### **Can I have someone pick up my ballot?**

Yes. You can designate someone to be your agent. This person will take your completed mail-in application to your [local board of elections](#), pick up your ballot, and deliver it to you. To get your ballot this way, you and your agent must complete the [Mail-in Ballot: Designation of Agent Form](#) ([Papeleta de Votante Ausente: Formulario para Designar un Representante](#)). This form can also be obtained from your [local board of elections](#).

### **I'm not Registered to Vote**

If you are not registered to vote or do not know if you are registered to vote, use the [online voter look-up](#) to find out. If you are not registered to vote, find out [how to register to vote](#).

Click here to [Register to Vote and receive a Mail-in ballot](#)

- To Register through your mobile phone, text "vote" to 777-88 on your mobile phone

### **Can I vote if I've been convicted of a felony or have a past criminal conviction?**

Laws around voting eligibility relating to criminal record vary by state. Click the link for additional information on your eligibility to vote <http://elections.maryland.gov> or call 410-269-2840.

### **I'm registered to vote, what are my options in casting my ballot?**

## You may request an absentee ballot/mail-in for the 2020 presidential election?

- Click here for [Information and Instructions for the 2020 Election](#)

You choose how you want to receive your absentee/mail-in ballot. **The absentee/mail-in ballot is essentially the same form.** Election officials can mail or fax your ballot to you, or you can download your ballot from the State's website.

When you request a ballot, you pick how you want to receive your ballot. If you want to download your ballot, make sure you provide your email address.

Ballots are sent or posted to the website about 3 weeks before an election. If you want to download your ballot, they will send you an email when your ballot is ready. The email will include a link where you can print your ballot and instructions.

If you would like your ballot delivered to you electronically or want your ballot mailed to a different address, please submit a request. You can submit a request online or via paper form. If you use a paper form, read the instructions, enter the required information, print the form, sign it, and return it to your local board of elections. You can return it by mail, fax, or email.

- Click here for an [Online application for Mail-in Ballot \(If you have a Maryland driver's license or MVA-issued ID card.\)](#)
- Click here for a [Mail-in ballot application for 2020 elections \(PDF\)](#)
- [Solicitud de Papeleta de Votante Ausente para las Elecciones del 2020 \(PDF\)](#)

## What are my voting options for submitting my ballot?

- Click here [elections.maryland.gov](https://elections.maryland.gov).

## How do I know if my request for a ballot was received and processed?

Visit the [voter look-up website](#) to verify if your [local board of elections](#) received your request for a ballot and the status of your mail-in ballot. If you have more questions, please contact your [local board of elections](#).

## **How do I vote with my mail-in ballot?**

There are instructions with your ballot. Please review the instructions carefully before starting to vote.

If you received your ballot by mail or fax, you need a **black** pen to vote. Review your ballot before voting as your ballot may be multiple pages. Carefully fill in the oval to the left of your choice, and do not vote for more candidates than the number specified in the contest heading. If you wish, you may vote for fewer candidates than specified.

If you download your ballot from the State's website, you can print the blank ballot and mark your ballot by hand.

Do **not** sign your name or make any other mark on your ballot.

Write-in voting is only allowed in general elections. A general election ballot has spaces for write-in votes. To cast a write-in vote by hand, fill in the oval to the left of the space for the write-in vote, and write the first and last name of the person in the appropriate space.

You must mail or hand deliver your mail-in ballot to your local board of elections. You cannot email or fax your voted mail-in ballot or take your voted ballot to an early voting center or a polling place.

## **How do I return my voted ballot?**

You must mail or hand deliver your voted ballot. You **cannot** submit your voted ballot online, return it by email or fax.

## **2020 Presidential General Election**

Use the envelope provided with your ballot. You can:

- Hand deliver your ballot. You must deliver it to your local board of elections by 8 pm on election day, or you may take it to an early voting center or a polling place by the time the polls close.
- Mail your ballot. If you mail your voted ballot, make sure the envelope is postmarked on or before general election day (November 3, 2020). Your voted ballot must be received by your local board of elections by 10 am on November 13, 2020.
- If you have specific questions, contact your [local board of elections](#) or the [State Board of Elections](#).

## Who are these candidates? / How do I know who is for my issues?

- In general, access their campaign websites for information on the candidates.
- For more information about judges, click [The Robing Room](#) and also contact the Maryland Bar Association to see if there have been any complaints lodged against any of the candidates.

## Why is my ballot different from my neighbors or family members' ballot?

### How to fill my ballot out correctly?

Just like New Psalmist physically is located in two different counties and sits on the borderline of Baltimore City and Baltimore County, you may be in a different county from your neighbor or family member. Make sure you do advance research on the candidates and initiatives in your county before you go to cast your vote.

Ballot Measures or referenda may appear alongside votes for candidates. These are opportunities to vote directly on an issue in your state or county. Make sure you do advance research on these initiatives before you go to cast your vote. The wording of ballot measures can be unclear, so it is not obvious whether a "yes" or "no" vote means you support the initiative or oppose it. Read carefully to make sure you're making the decision you want to make. You can even go a step further and propose a ballot initiative of your own after learning the local process.

## When will I receive my ballot in the mail?

Tentatively, for those that apply early your ballots should start arriving around the 3rd week of September. Apply for your ballot now! The deadline to request a ballot by mail is Friday October 30, 2020.

## **Voting Locations**

### **What are the locations for early voting?**

Early voting starts on Monday, October 26, 2020 and goes through Monday November 2, 2020. Anyone in line at 8 pm will be allowed to Vote.

Click here for [Early Voting](#) sites or call 410-269-2840 or 1-800-222-8683

### **How do I find my polling location for Nov. 3rd?**

During early voting, you can vote at any voting center in the jurisdiction where you live. Find out where the early voting center or centers are in your jurisdiction; call 410-269-2840 or 1-800-222-8683

### **Where are the drop off sites? Do I take my ballot directly to the drop off site or to the board of elections?**

Drop off sites are being finalized by county. However, each board of elections office is a drop off site. Often, they pick up the ballots three times a day.

## **Service Opportunities / Mobilize Your Community**

### **Become a certified voter registrar**

New Psalmist has over 15 certified voter registrars. If you are interested in learning to

become a voter registrar, please send an email to [amen@newpsalmist.org](mailto:amen@newpsalmist.org) You can also check with your county board of elections to see if they have virtual voter registrar training. The Baltimore City Board of Elections, for example, does not have a virtual Voter Registration Volunteer Training platform set-up at this time.

## **How can I become an election judge to make sure we can open more polls in my county?**

Election judges are responsible for administering voting procedures in their precinct and ensuring a fair and accessible election for all eligible voters. Duties include setting up and breaking down a polling place before and after voting hours. Other duties may include checking in voters, assisting voters, and overseeing all election procedures throughout the polling place.

Please use this link to apply to become a:

- Baltimore City [election judge](#).
- Baltimore County [election judge](#)
- Howard County [election judge](#)
- Montgomery County [election judge](#)
- Harford County [election judge](#)
- Carroll County [election judge](#)
- Prince George's County [election judge](#)

If you live in another county other than the above, google the name of your county and "election judge" and you will receive instructions.

## **Can I bring my neighbors ballot with me?**

Yes, until we hear otherwise. Our recommendation is that you call your local board of election and let them know you are coming and bringing multiple ballots. The contacts for the local boards of election are:

## **Local Boards of Election**

### **Baltimore City**

Charles L. Benton Building

417 E. Fayette Street, Room 129

Baltimore MD 21202-3432

Armstead B. C. Jones, Sr., Election Director

410-396-5550

410-962-8747 (Fax)

Fax for Absentee Ballots Only: 410-727-1775 or 410-783-7394

<http://boe.baltimorecity.gov>

**Email Address:** [election.judge@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:election.judge@baltimorecity.gov)

[Directions To This Location](#)

### **Baltimore County**

11112 Gilroy Road, Suite 104

Hunt Valley, MD 21031

Katie Brown, Election Director

410-887-5700

410-887-0894 (fax)

<http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/elections/index.html>

**Email Address:** [elections@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:elections@baltimorecountymd.gov)

[Directions To This Location](#)

### **Carroll**

300 South Center Street, Room 212

Westminster MD 21157-5248

Katherine Berry, Election Director

410-386-2080

410-876-3925 (Fax)

<https://elections.carrollcountymd.gov/>

**Email Address:** [ccboe@carrollcountymd.gov](mailto:ccboe@carrollcountymd.gov)

[Directions To This Location](#)

### **Harford**

133 Industry Lane

Forest Hill MD 21050

Kim Slusar, Acting Election Director

410-638-3565

410-638-3310 (Fax)

<http://www.harfordvotes.info/>

**Email Address:** [elections@harfordcountymd.gov](mailto:elections@harfordcountymd.gov)

[Directions to This Location](#)

### **Howard**

9770 Patuxent Woods Drive, Suite 200

Columbia MD 21046

Guy Mickley, Election Director

410-313-5820

410-313-5833 (Fax; [voter registration](#) application and [absentee ballot](#) requests)

410-313-5899 (Fax)

<http://www.howardcountymd.gov/BOE>

**Email Address:** [gmickley@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:gmickley@howardcountymd.gov)

[Directions To This Location](#)

## Montgomery

Street Address: 18753-210 N. Frederick Avenue  
Gaithersburg MD 20879-3121

Mailing Addresses:

P.O. Box 4333 - Rockville MD 20849-4333

*For Absentee Ballot Applications Only:*

P.O. Box 10159 - Rockville MD 20849-0159

*For Absentee Ballots Only:*

P.O. Box 10369 - Rockville MD 20849-0369

Margaret A. Jurgensen, Election Director

240-777-8500

240-777-8505 (Fax)

[www.777vote.org/](http://www.777vote.org/)

**Email Address:** [elections@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:elections@montgomerycountymd.gov)

**Absentee Voting:** [absentee@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:absentee@montgomerycountymd.gov)

[Directions To This Location](#)

## Prince George's

1100 Mercantile Lane, Suite 115A

Largo, MD 20774

Alisha Alexander, Election Director

301-341-7300

301-341-7391 (Fax)

<http://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/559/Board-of-Elections>

**Email Address:** [election@co.pg.md.us](mailto:election@co.pg.md.us)

[Directions To This Location](#)

If you do not see your local board of elections listed, please click [here](#).

## What if someone you know doesn't have digital access?

The polls will be open for in-person voting 8 am - 8 pm.

## Rides to the polls

Not everyone has an easy means of transportation to get to their polling location. Connect with a senior or neighbor to make sure they are able to make it to the polls.

## If you experience voter suppression and intimidation

Join Lawyers and Collars. This initiative engages pastors, imams, rabbis, and other faith leaders to join together with lawyers to support citizens in areas where voter suppression and intimidation may occur. The presence of faith leaders and trained legal experts will provide needed support to communities fearful of suppression and intimidation. [Check out their website](#) for more information.

## Inspirational Quotes for thought and communal reflection

*By Minister Jason Carson Wilson, M. Div., Justice and Peace Policy Fellow, United Church of Christ*

Ephesians 4:31-32: Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.

John Quincy Adams, 6th President of the United States of America: "Always vote for principle, though you may vote alone, and you may cherish the sweetest reflection that your vote is never lost."

Bayard Rustin: "If we desire a society of peace, then we cannot achieve such a society through violence. If we desire a society without discrimination, then we must not discriminate against anyone in the process of building this society. If we desire a society that is democratic, then democracy must become a means as well as an end."

Audre Lorde, *Our Dead Behind Us: Poems*. "It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences."

Isaiah 58:6-10:

Is this not the fast which I choose,  
To loosen the bonds of wickedness,  
To undo the bands of the yoke,  
And to let the oppressed go free  
And break every yoke?

Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry And bring the homeless poor into the  
house; When you see the naked, to cover him;  
And not to hide yourself from your own flesh?