

As people of faith, participating in civic life is one of the ways we live out our calling to love and serve our neighbors.

Our ELCA social statement *Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All* reminds us that Christians are called to participate in our social and political communities and to seek the well-being of all, especially those whose voices are too often pushed to the margins. The ELCA describes civic participation as one way we put love of neighbor into action and work for the common good. ([ELCA](#))

One important way we do that is by voting.

As we approach the November 3 election, I encourage every eligible voter in our synod to make a plan to vote—and to help others make their plans as well. Check in with family members, friends, neighbors and members of your congregation. Does someone need help figuring out where to vote? A ride to the polls? Help understanding the process? Our commitment to civic participation is not only about casting our own ballots but also helping ensure that our neighbors are able to exercise that right.

In Texas, **early voting begins Monday, October 19, and continues through Friday, October 30.** I encourage you, if you are able, to **vote on the first day of early voting.** Voting early helps ensure that unexpected illness, work demands, weather or other complications do not prevent you from casting your ballot.

And remember: if you have questions about voting—or encounter a problem before or while voting—help is available through the national, nonpartisan Election Protection hotline. **Call or text [1-866-OUR-VOTE \(1-866-687-8683\)](tel:1-866-OUR-VOTE)**. Trained volunteers can answer questions about registration, early voting, voting by mail and Election Day, and can assist voters who encounter difficulties at the polls. ([Election Protection](#))

Voting is not about the church telling anyone **who** to vote for. It is about taking seriously our responsibility to participate in the life of our communities, to seek the good of our neighbors and to use the voice entrusted to us.

**Be faithful. Be informed. Be engaged. Make your plan—and vote.**

**Love, Bishop Sue**