

The other day there was a Facebook post designed to remind people of the importance of exercising our right to vote. The gist of the post was that *if voting were not important leaders in communities and states wouldn't go to all the effort to verify voter registration; if it didn't matter billionaires wouldn't put so much money into Political Action Committees trying to influence our votes; if it wasn't important we wouldn't have the Russians trying to hack into our voting system.* But voter turnout in our nation for past elections barely caps 50% of eligible voters. In the last local primary election only 19% of eligible voters went to the polls.



Closer to home, our beloved ABCRGR is designed to be a representative government. Every church is treated equally in that they are given three votes. A pastor and two others from each church may vote as Delegates of their congregation.

To enhance participation, we have initiated video and/or conference call capacity at meetings. We provide ballots for each congregation who may not be able to participate because of distance. Still we barely meet the 1/3 quorum (16 congregations) at some meetings.

This is one of my last opportunities to address you through the newsletter and my message is **become involved**. Make certain that your church has Delegates **who do attend**.

According to the ABCRGR Constitution and Bylaws, "the Delegates shall have ultimate authority in all region matters." The Delegates' role is to share regional news with your congregation and to share information about your congregation with your sister congregations. The Delegates are to be your voice in regional decisions and to share your ideas about future directions for the region.

If for some reason Delegates and Pastor have a conflict with a meeting date, please develop a plan for alternatives so your church is always represented.

It is participation, which makes for a strong healthy region. The 48 churches of ABCRGR are the region.

Alan A. Newton