

A Justice Ministry Newsletter for Disciples of Christ-from the heart of Pastor Williams

Theme: One Act of Resistance

“Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God.” — Micah 6:8

This Week’s Justice Focus: Knowledge through Education & Access

Voting Measures available in Missouri

Mail in voting:

Did you know? You can receive your ballot at home and return it by mail.

Absentee Voting: If you aren’t available on voting day you can vote by Absentee

In person voting is available with presenting the required documentation-usually a Missouri Id, Drivers License, Voter Registration Card or Passport

Voting in August is just as important as any other election because it affects your neighbors.

Access to information is key:

Where do you get your information regarding elections.

Listening to ads on television or social media is not enough. Proper research is necessary to understand the issue.

Faith & Justice Reflection

From a biblical justice perspective, the questions churches often ask are:

- Does this decision protect the vulnerable?
- Does it increase fairness or widen gaps?
- Who benefits?
- Who carries the burden?
- Are the voices of those most affected being heard?

Proverbs 31:9:

“Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.”

For a church discussion, it may be helpful to encourage members to read the full ballot language, research multiple perspectives, and vote prayerfully and informed.

Amendment 1 — State Parks & Soil/Water Conservation Tax

Possible concerns for communities who are marginalized:

- This amendment continues an existing sales/use tax that supports state parks, historic sites, and conservation. It is generally viewed as less directly connected to racial justice issues.
- Some concerns focus on **access and investment**: communities of color have historically experienced unequal access to green spaces, environmental protections, and recreational resources. The question becomes whether these funds benefit all communities equitably.

Justice question:

“Are all Missouri communities equally benefiting from the resources we are preserving?”

Amendment 2 — County Assessors

This would require charter counties, including Jackson County, to elect county assessors and require training requirements.

Possible concerns for communities who are marginalized:

- Property assessments directly affect:
 - property taxes
 - housing stability
 - wealth building
- Because many Black families and families of color have historically faced barriers to homeownership and wealth accumulation, unfair assessments can have a larger impact.
- Critics may ask whether changing assessor systems increases accountability—or creates more political influence over property decisions.

Justice question:

“Who has power over decisions that affect whether families can keep their homes?”

Amendment 4 — Changing Citizen Initiative Rules

This would require constitutional amendments passed by citizen petitions to win:

- a statewide majority **and**
- a majority in each congressional district.

Possible concerns for communities who are marginalized:

- Historically, ballot initiatives have been one way communities outside traditional political power structures have changed laws.
- Critics argue this could make it harder for statewide movements supported by a majority of voters to succeed if one district votes against it.
- Communities that have relied on direct democracy for issues like labor rights, civil rights protections, voting access, or justice reforms may be concerned about losing that pathway.

Justice question:

“Does this protect democracy, or does it make it harder for ordinary people to change systems?”

Amendment 5 — Ending the Individual Income Tax / Expanding Sales Taxes

This amendment would phase out Missouri’s individual income tax and allow expansion of sales/use taxes.

Possible concerns for communities who are marginalized:

- Sales taxes usually take a larger percentage of income from lower-income households because people with less income spend more of what they earn on everyday needs.
- Many communities of color have higher rates of lower household wealth due to historical economic inequities.
- Critics argue shifting from income taxes to sales taxes could place more burden on working families while benefiting higher-income households.

Example:

- A family making \$35,000 spends most of its money on necessities.
- A family making \$350,000 has more ability to save and invest.
- A tax system based more heavily on spending can affect the first family more.

Justice question:

“Who carries the cost of government—those who have the most resources, or those who have the least?”

How we vote matters and speaks to how we care for one another in community.

One Act of Resistance

- Before next Tuesday, complete **ONE act of resistance**:
 - ☐ Read up on the Ballot Amendments. Discuss these to make sure you know what its asking if you vote for or against.
 - ☐ Ask 4 people are they registered to vote. If anyone is not help them get registered.
 - ☐ Ask 2 friends if they need a ride to vote in August and make a plan
 - ☐ Invite us to your faith community to discuss Justice ministry initiatives
 - ☐ Share a justice concern in your congregation

Small acts become movements when faithful people act together.

If you read to the end of this letter and find yourself interested in Reconciliation Ministry with the ARPR Justice Ministry, please email me to join the team
angela@ccmadisciples.org