

Be strong advocates for voting rights

by Carol Blythe

The Alliance of Baptists has adopted many statements over the years that reflect its commitment to living out its covenant and mission statement. In our statements we lift our voices to address important issues before our national community – issues like gun violence, climate change, just and comprehensive immigration reform, mass incarceration, adequate funding for schools, access to health care, economic justice, a living wage and many more.

But too often our political leadership has not responded to our calls for justice. Voting is one of the best ways to lift our voices and make our voices heard! If political leaders are not listening to our calls for justice, we can change our representatives by voting.

When we vote for candidates who stand with us on our calls for justice we are “loving our neighbor.” We are loving the neighbor who needs good schools, the neighbor who needs access to health care, the neighbor who yearns for immigration reform or the neighbor who needs a living wage to support her family.

To ensure all eligible voters are able to vote in the important November 2018 election, we must be strong advocates for voting rights. You or your congregation can help with voter registration drives, candidate forums and many other activities to be sure all eligible voters can vote.

Our friends at the United Church of Christ have lots of ideas and information on what a congregation can do to be sure all voices are heard. Check out the Our Faith Our Vote (www.ucc.org/ourfaithourvote) section of their website. The Our Faith, Our Vote Toolkit (www.ucc.org/ourfaithourvote_our-faith-our-vote-downloads) provides information needed to learn how to engage your church in voter registration, issue education, get-out-the-vote and more.

We have been inspired by the National Moral Revival Tour to Redefine Morality in American Politics led by Repairers of the Breach and Dr. William Barber II. The group issued a Higher Ground Moral Declaration (www.breachrepairers.org/moralagenda) setting out a moral agenda for our nation, including supporting voting rights and resisting efforts of voter suppression.

Similar to Dr. Barber's call¹, congregations in the Alliance of Baptists will raise their voices for justice for people struggling in poverty, LGBTQ people, children, workers, immigrants, communities of color and the sick. And to be sure our voices are heard, we will vote and support voting rights for all!

¹ Dr. Barber spoke on voting rights at The Gathering at Alliance congregational partner Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in Raleigh, N.C. on July 2, 2017. View his message at www.breachrepairers.org/blog/voting-rights.

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