



Youth Groups

Throughout history, political leaders have looked to young people as a source of inspiration for the continued success and health of our nation. In addition, young people have both a right and a responsibility to help shape the future that they will inherit. Youth bring a unique perspective and tangible energy to election year activism. Although young people under 18 may not be able to legally cast their votes, their voices can still be heard. There are a number of ways for youth to participate in elections and make an impact on their future. The UCC Our Faith Our Vote campaign is not only for adult leaders in the congregation. Youth groups can and are encouraged to take the opportunity to engage their local congregations and their communities in the Our Faith Our Vote campaign by becoming their congregation's team leader.

Registration Ideas

- Set up a voter registration table before and after church
- Set up a voter registration table at church events
- Go out into your community and register voters at the local shopping center, grocery store, fair and other community events
- Encourage your school administration to hold a registration drive or include voter registration cards with high school diplomas

'Shout out, do not
hold back! Lift up
your voice like a
trumpet!
— Isaiah 58:1

Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV) Ideas

- Volunteer to drive individuals to the polls.
- Organize or participate in phone banking.
- Organize or participate in canvassing.
- Volunteer to provide child care while people vote.

Education Ideas for Youth Ministries or Sunday School

Discussion questions on civic responsibility:

- Why do you think voting is important? Why do you think some people don't vote?
- Who is running for office and what do they stand for?
- How do you believe people should be treated in our society?
- What things do people need to live a good life?

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God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
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- What are a few local, national, and international problems, and what can we do to help solve them?
- What are some examples of public policies from the past that were harmful to people (e.g. slavery, the Holocaust, lack of voting rights for women or minorities)? What does our faith or ethics tell us about these policies?
- What are issues being discussed in the campaigns that have moral or ethical dimensions (e.g. hunger, environmental protection, and education)? Explain both sides of the debate
- What did Jesus say about taking responsibility for our society?
- Can you name some New or Old Testament figures

that were part of the political debate of their time? (Moses and the law, the prophets, etc)

Activities

- Have a “Love Your Neighbor: Vote” poster contest in your church or community, or ask youth to create posters or flyers that inform their congregation and community about the upcoming elections.
- Create an “Investigating Political Reporter Sheet” and have youth interview family, congregation, or community members with several questions: Have you ever voted? Are you registered to vote? Did you vote in the last election? Do you plan to vote in this election? Is it important to vote? If so, why? What issues concern you? Which presidential candidate do you think best represents your views? Why?

Activity: (30-45 minutes) The Prayer Tree/The Wish Tree

Objective:

- Students make a wish or offer a prayer for their country to clarify what changes they can make.

Get Ready:

- Find a bare tree or large branch and place it in a pot filled with pebbles.
- Print and cut apart a star for each student.

Locate:

- One 8-inch piece of string or yarn for each student
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- Scissors
- Paper punch

Make the Tree:

- Instruct the students to cut out the star, and decorate the cover.
- Ask the students to think of the wish they would most like for our country, or to offer up a prayer.
- Help the students draw or write their wishes and prayers on to their stars and sign their names.
- Help the students punch a hole in the corner of each card and tie a string through the hole.
- Hold a ceremony, inviting the students to tie their cards to the tree. They may read or describe their wishes and prayers as they place them on the tree or students may discover the wishes privately one by one later on.

(You can also place the bare tree at the front of your church and during the church service invite the students to come place their wishes and prayers on the tree. You can invite the entire congregation to pray for the concerns of the students.)