



## Restoring the Voice of the People

Dear Friends,

For people of faith, the public arena we know as “politics” is much more than you see on the news. It is the forum through which we live out the commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves. Scripture reminds us over and over that building right relationship in human community and with God’s creation is inseparable from our relationship to God. Through just public policy decision making we can order our common life in a way that is faithful to our relationship with God.

So it is appropriate for faith communities to engage in nonpartisan voter education and empowerment programs that help us reflect on our collective life and the common good through the political process. Indeed, to do so is to be faithful to our call to be in the world. When we wonder whether we should be part of the election process, we need only remember the witness of Jesus challenging the powers and principalities in search of justice for the “least of these.”

These are difficult and challenging times for our local communities, our country and the world. Divisive and heated rhetoric dominates the airwaves and the public dialogue. Meanwhile, the power of money is shutting out the voice of the average citizen and undermining the democratic process. As a result, many people are withdrawing from engagement in the political process out of a growing sense of cynicism, distrust, and lack of hope. We face an uphill struggle in efforts to encourage people to participate in the electoral process, but the stakes are as high as they have ever been.

Now, more than ever, your voice and your efforts are needed. As people of faith, we can play a unique role in this election cycle, by encouraging civil, respectful dialogue that builds community and a hope-filled vision of the future that includes all people. We can help to restore the soul of democracy.

The Our Faith Our Vote resource provides information and ideas to assist individuals and congregations in developing appropriate and meaningful ways to engage the political and electoral process as people of faith. Congregations can engage in a variety of nonpartisan programs such as conducting voter registration and voter participation drives, holding candidate forums and attending town hall meetings, organizing issue education opportunities, and protecting the voting rights of all.

The need to equip ourselves and our communities to make informed, thoughtful decisions about those who will lead us in the future is great. It is our fervent hope that you will connect with members of your local church and community this year through the Our Faith Our Vote campaign.

Your vote is your voice — and every voice makes a difference!

Courage in the struggle,

The Rev. M. Linda Jaramillo  
Executive Minister  
UCC Justice and Witness Ministries

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

**United Church of Christ**  
**Justice and Witness Ministries**  
100 Maryland Ave. NE, #330  
Washington, DC 20002  
202 543 1517

*God is still speaking,*  
**UNITED CHURCH**  
**OF CHRIST**

