



Voting as Christian Stewardship

An Election Day message from the Presiding Bishop

By the Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori

As Election Day approaches, I want to remind you that our democracy gives us the opportunity to speak urgently about the many issues and challenges confronting our nation and the world. I would encourage every eligible voter to prayerfully consider the choices before us and commit to using the political process to seek solutions to our society's most intractable problems. As part of our baptismal vows we commit "to strive for justice and peace among all people" and "respect the dignity of every human being." As you prepare to vote, I urge you to consider how the Reign of God – a just society – particularly as explicated by the Hebrew prophets and by Jesus, can be made real in our own day.

Our baptismal ministry calls us to transform our communities into something that looks more like that Reign of God. That is our part in God's mission. We are sent and commissioned to build a society where all have ade-

quate access to health care, where the weakest are protected and God's creation safeguarded, and where each person has access to the blessings of life. That work requires committed engagement in the civic life of our nation if we seek to make God's dream more effectively real and complete in this world.

As caretakers and stewards of all of God's creation, each one of us is responsible for the flourishing of the rest of the human family. As in all elections, on November 4 we have the opportunity to continue working to reconcile and heal the world. I urge every citizen to use this opportunity to motivate our government to respond to, and participate in, building the Reign of God. We prepare the ground for the possibility of more abundant life through our part in the ministry of governance.

Voting and political participation are acts of Christian stewardship, in which citizens can engage in a common conversation about the future of our nation and the world. I urge you to exercise your right to vote, and to encourage and help others to do so as well.





Prayers for Sound Government

O Lord our governor, bless the leaders of our land, that we may be a people at peace among ourselves and a blessing to other nations of the earth.

Lord, keep this nation under your care.

To the President and members of the cabinet, to governors of states, Mayors of cities, and to all in administrative authority, grant wisdom and grace in the exercise of their duties.

Give grace to your servants, O Lord.

To senators and representatives, and those who make our laws in states, cities and towns, give courage, wisdom and foresight to provide for the needs of all our people, and to fulfill our obligations in the community of nations.

Give grace to your servants, O Lord.

To the judges and officers of our courts give understanding and integrity, that human rights may be safeguarded and justice served.

Give grace to your servants, O Lord.

And finally, teach our people to rely on your strength and to accept their responsibilities to their fellow citizens, that they may elect trustworthy leaders and make wise decisions for the well-being of our society; that we may serve you faithfully in our generation and honor your holy name.

For yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Amen.

—*Book of Common Prayer, page 821*

Prayer for an Election

Almighty God, to whom we must account for all our powers and privileges; guide the people of the United States in the election of officials and representatives; that, by faithful administration and wise laws, the rights of all may be protected and our nation be enabled to fulfill your purposes; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

—*Book of Common Prayer, page 822*