



Board of Christian Social Action

Special Edition

NEWSLETTER

General Election 2020

October 2020

Volume 1, Number 3

In This Issue

We focus on the important facts related to your full participation in the General Election 2020:

- Voter's Checklist
- Voter Eligibility
- Voter Registration

Also included

- A Message Becomes a Movement... *Our Second Act*
- The Importance of Voting
- A Message From A Minister

WASHINGTON, DC DEADLINES

**REGISTRATION
REC'D BY OCTOBER
13**

**REQUEST ABSENTEE
BALLOT
OCTOBER 27**

**RETURN
ABSENTEE BALLOT
NOVEMBER 3**

**EARLY VOTING
OCTOBER 17 - 30**

**DC BOARD OF
ELECTIONS
WWW.
DCBOE.ORG**

Voter's Checklist

✓ Things to Do Before Election Day (Tuesday November 3, 2020)

- Confirm you are registered to vote several weeks before Election Day.
- Update your registration if your address, name, or political affiliation has changed.
- Know how and when to apply for an absentee ballot if you are unable to vote at your polling place on Election Day.
- Know your options for early voting.
- Know the voter identification requirements in your State.
- Know your polling place and how to get there.
- Familiarize yourself with the voting device used in your jurisdiction.
- Learn how the device is accessible to voters with disabilities.
- Know what time the polls open and close.
- Become acquainted with the candidates and issues on the ballot.
- Consider becoming a poll worker in your community.
- Call your local election office to learn more. [Click the link for your state to see the Elections Information ([DC](#), [MD](#) or [VA](#))]

-Remember-

For more information about State-specific requirements and eligibility, contact your State or local election offices or consult The National Mail Voter Registration Form. (See the resources available by clicking on your state: [DC](#), [MD](#) or [VA](#))

Note: Text provided in "colors" are clickable links to help you learn more about the information provided.

MARYLAND DEADLINES

REGISTRATION
OCTOBER 13

**REQUEST ABSENTEE
BALLOT**
OCTOBER 30

**RETURN
ABSENTEE BALLOT**
NOVEMBER 3

EARLY VOTING
OCT 26 - NOV 2

**MD BOARD OF
ELECTIONS**
**WWW.
ELECTIONS.
MARYLAND.GOV**

VIRGINIA DEADLINES

REGISTRATION
OCTOBER 13

**REQUEST
ABSENTEE BALLOT
BY MAIL: OCT 23**
**IN PERSON:
OCT 31**

**RETURN
ABSENTEE BALLOT**
NOVEMBER 3

EARLY VOTING
SEPT 19 - OCT 31

**VA BOARD OF
ELECTIONS**
**WWW.
ELECTIONS.
VIRGINIA.GOV**

Voter Eligibility

Am I Eligible To Vote?

You are eligible to vote if:

- You are a U.S. citizen.
- You meet your State's residency requirements.
- You are 18 years old. Some States allow 17-year-olds to vote in primaries and/or register to vote if they will be 18 before the general election.

In Person

- Apply to register to vote at your State or local voter registration or election offices ([DC](#), [MD](#) or [VA](#))
- The department of motor vehicles
- Public assistance agencies
- Armed services recruitment centers
- State-funded programs that serve people with disabilities
- Any public facility that a State has designated as a voter registration agency

*[***Due to COVID-19 Online voter registration is encouraged. To learn if your State offers on-line voter registration, contact your State or local election office; or see the resources available by clicking on your state: [DC](#), [MD](#) or [VA](#).]*

How Do I Register To Vote?

- By Mail
 - Download the National Mail Voter Registration Form
 - (NMVRF) from <https://www.eac.gov/voters/register-and-vote-in-your-state>. You can also find NMVRF and State voter registration forms at libraries, public schools, and city and county clerks' offices.
 - Complete the form and submit it by mail according to the instructions. The NMVRF has a "State Instructions" section that lists the requirements for each State. North Dakota, Wyoming, and the U.S. territories American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands do not accept the NMVRF. New Hampshire accepts the form only as a request for a State absentee voter mail-in registration form.

Note: Text provided in "colors" are clickable links to help you learn more about the information provided.

What Is Absentee Voting?

If you cannot go to your polling place on Election Day, you may qualify to cast an absentee ballot.

Some States allow you to cast an absentee ballot only if you cannot vote at the polling place for a reason outlined in State law, such as illness or physical absence from the jurisdiction for a certain number of hours on Election Day.

Other States offer “no-excuse” absentee voting, which allows any eligible citizen to cast an absentee ballot.

You are entitled by Federal law to vote by absentee ballot in Federal elections if you meet qualifications outlined in the Voting Rights Act, Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, and Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act.

-Remember-

- ✓ After you have received your absentee ballot, read the instructions carefully. Sign your name where it is required. If you return your absentee ballot by mail, be certain to put sufficient postage to the return envelope.
- ✓ After you have received your absentee ballot, read the instructions carefully. Sign name where it is required. If return ballot by mail, be certain to put sufficient postage envelope.

What Is Early Voting?

Some States might allow you to cast a ballot before election day at:

- A jurisdiction’s election office
- Another designated polling place
- A ballot drop site

Where Do I Vote—Where Is My Polling Place?

- ✓ You are assigned to a polling place based on the home address on your voter registration record.
- ✓ Some States have ballot drop sites instead of polling places.
- ✓ To find out the location of your polling place or ballot drop sites, contact your State or local election office ([DC](#), [MD](#) or [VA](#)).

May I Request Assistance To Vote?

Note: Text provided in “colors” are clickable links to help you learn more about the information provided.

- Under Federal law, you may bring an individual to assist you in voting for reasons of:
 - Blindness
 - Disability
 - Inability to read or write
- Federal law prohibits you from receiving voting assistance from your employer or an agent of employer, officer the voter's union. However a poll worker can provide to:
 - First-time voters
 - Voters with disabilities
 - Voters at polling places with new voting equipment

-Remember-

Some States offer “curbside voting,” in which a poll worker brings all voting materials to your car if you cannot leave your car easily. Check with your State or local election office to see if curbside voting is available in your jurisdiction and for additional provisions about voting assistance. (See the resources available by clicking on your state: [DC](#), [MD](#) or [VA](#))

A Message Becomes a Movement... *Our Second Act*

By R. Hendricks

Roughly, two generations ago scores of Black people, with many others

fought to ensure that **Blacks** could have the right to vote. They did this because they understood the importance of the democratic process and that for the fullest embodiment of Democracy in these United States, **we (all people)** must have the right to vote and to do so uninhibitedly. They knew that if they were able to vote, they would be able to influence the world in which they lived. They understood that elections provide an opportunity to increase and influence change, which helped improve the path toward Blacks in America being recognized as

equal citizens. Therefore, to each I say, we must **treat voting not just as a right, but a responsibility.**

When we decline, or “copout” and do not vote, we essentially say that we do not care about the effect that our vote has on our lives or of those around us. Voting helps make good changes happen in peoples’ lives; so it is time for each of us to reclaim and recognize the political power we have in our collective vote. The 2020 General Election, November 3, 2020 is our second act, another chance to engage fully as a community of believers, in a movement of change

that will affect our country’s hopes for a brighter future. Remember, **we have the power** to effect the political difference we want to see occur for improvements in our communities, in our nation and our world.

Why We Need to Vote!

Note: Text provided in “colors” are clickable links to help you learn more about the information provided.

(Excerpt) By Debra Long-Doyle

My hero and a friend of People's Church, is Congressman John Lewis. As we all know, he was a champion of voting rights. His last public words were published in a [Washington Post](#) article shortly after his death. He reminded us of what he fought for all of his life. He walked the walk, and talked the talk, reminding us in his last words that “[V]oting and participating in the democratic process is key. The vote is the most powerful nonviolent change agent you have in a democratic society. You must use it because it is not guaranteed. You can lose it.” In his passing, he has passed the torch on to us all. And now, we must also do our part in voting and getting everyone in our orbit to do the same to honor the legacy of Brother Congressman Lewis.

“[W]hen you march, when you do things like getting people to vote, taking people to the polls, making sure their rights are being upheld, you honor John Lewis. The struggle continues, and I want to make sure that I live up to his legacy by doing everything I can to make sure that everyone's rights are protected.” ...

“You must be bold, brave and courageous and find a way to get in the way.”

~John Lewis



Message From A Minister

On September 19th, in a riveting open letter authored in the wake of the death of former Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, “*Notorious RBG*”, Rev. Mahogany Thomas wrote a passion filled edict encouraging folk to vote in the 2020 General Election (November 3, 2020), but also made clear the “stakes” that are on the line if we don’t... As Thomas recaps her personal feelings of trauma and dread, in the wake of the 2016 General Election, she eloquently and naturally puts into perspective the feelings that many Blacks had about the turn the country might take in a post Obama presidency time. What is so vividly clear in the Thomas letter is the fact “fear” must not stop us from voting. Moreover, in her educating each of us to recognize that *we are not okay*..., she reminds us that to remedy our present state, we must reject the current tide of hatemongering, lies and vitriolic behavior, which has so insidiously gripped our country these past couple years, which threatens not only our civil liberties, but our Democracy.

Note: Text provided in “colors” are clickable links to help you learn more about the information provided.

...We Are Not Okay...

(Excerpt) By Rev. Mahogany S. Thomas

"We are not okay, neither individually nor collectively. We are not okay. And it does not matter where you are on the political spectrum, none of us are okay. We are all living and breathing this web of negligence and its suffocating power. We are all reaping the consequences of a nation that devalued the sense of communal well-being which is wearing down our spirits.

We are not okay, as we have become desensitized to the atrocities of supremacist culture in a privileged society. We have become immune to violent rhetoric and the influx of fabricated lies. We have sold ourselves into the pit of capitalism and allowed consumerism to dictate our notions of success.

We are not okay. And with the death of our beloved Ruth Bader Ginsburg, I cannot remain silent anymore.

Our nation is not okay. None of us are okay. We are not okay.

And yes, my rhetoric is redundant, but the state of our collective being is imperative to the healing work that needs to take place in our nation. My redundancy is intentional.

We are not okay, and I am going to keep saying it.

Our civil rights are in jeopardy. Our humanity is on the line. We are suffering with bouts of increased residual trauma. All while operating with a high sense of polarization as our unresolved trauma permeates in the crevices of our very mobility.

We are not okay, and the only thing we can do when we are not okay is heal. We need to heal beloved; we need to heal. We have to.

We let religion morph into attacks on humanity. We let the sacred become manipulated for false political equity. We let our individualism neglect our neighbor, replacing empathy with increased violence.

And no more. We cannot take it anymore. Justice must prevail.

We must commit to the work of healing, which inevitably aligns with the manifestation of authentic justice. We cannot afford a mirage of leadership that sabotages our healing for individual wealth and gain.

That beloved is negligence and negligence is not the way.

So, vote, please, vote.

We can be tired and weary, but vote. We can be devastated and upset, but vote. We can be fearful and grieving, but vote.

We cannot afford to waste a singular vote, even in our dismay, so vote.

We need every vote. Every single vote. Our actual lives depend on it.

Please vote because we are not okay."

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[To read the *We Are Not Okay* letter in its entirety click: [here](#)]



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