

## **Operation Voter Turnout**

This year's national elections are rapidly approaching. In 64 days the votes of the American people will be counted and our national, state and local leaders will be determined. This will be the most important election of most of our lifetimes. This is going to be a very negative, controversial and polarizing election. There are already efforts underway to suppress the vote of Blacks, allow foreign interference, and dependent on the outcome, to claim the election was rigged. We must be prepared for anything during this election. Each of us must remain "woke", informed and determined to cast our ballot.

Georgia could be the most important state in this year's election. It is considered a toss- up state. The presidential race is close and Georgia unlike any other state will elect two United States Senators, which could change control of the United States Senate. Additionally there are at least two United States House seats, the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Districts, which will determine the shape of the United States House of Representatives. State legislative races in Georgia are important this year as control of the State House of Representatives could change.

The Black vote in Georgia and across the nation could determine the outcome in many of these races. Black turnout is the key. The decrease in Black turnout in 2016 determined the outcome of the presidential contest and a host of U S Senate seats. In Georgia less than 60% of Blacks turned out to vote in 2016. Understand, who is elected President of the United States, and who controls the United States Senate is in our hands, the hands of Black voters.

I am asking the Sixth Episcopal District to organize to produce a large Black turnout in this year's elections. A turnout that rivals or exceeds the 2008 and 2012 Black voter turnout. This effort will be called "Operation Voter Turnout." The success of this effort depends largely on the support and participation of pastors. Again, "everything rises or falls on leadership." Pastoral indifference will hurt this cause, pastoral enthusiasm and commitment will help us produce a great voter turnout. Every week the pastor should be talking about and encouraging us to vote.

The details are listed below.

### **Operation Voter Turnout**

1. Operation Turnout will begin with the churches and congregants in the Sixth Episcopal District. The goal will be to ensure that every registered voter in our congregations vote in the 2020 election. The members on roll will be the list that each church uses to make sure each of them vote.
2. The pastor will appoint a "Operation Turnout Committee" in each local church. It will be the responsibility of the "Operation Turnout Committee" in the local church to:
  - a. Make a list of all the eligible voters in the local church.

- b. Write or call them about the November election, give them date, encourage them to vote and inform them how important election is. Tell them the church is trying to make sure all of its congregants vote.
  - c. Encourage congregants to vote early, by absentee ballot or early voting. Ask them to apply for absentee ballot now. Can get application for absentee ballot online at: [sos.ga.gov](https://sos.ga.gov). Click on Elections then Voter Info- go down to Absentee Voting- click on fillable PDF of the Georgia Application for Official Absentee Ballot. Fill out application online. Committee may also print out absentee ballot application and include in letter sent to congregants. Include address of county Election Office for them to mail to or arrange to collect it and have the Committee return it. Have applications mailed to county Election Office by September 18<sup>th</sup>. Counties will begin mailing out absentee ballots September 14<sup>th</sup>.
3. If there are any questions regarding the absentee ballot application or absentee ballot they can check status at: <https://elections.sos.ga.gov/Elections/countyregistrars.do>
4. Those who don't vote by absentee ballot are encouraged to vote early. Early voting in Georgia begins on October 12<sup>th</sup> and ends on October 30<sup>th</sup>. Early voting will lessen the likelihood of having to wait in long lines to vote. You will need photo ID to vote. We would like all of our congregants to have voted by absentee ballot or early voting by October 30<sup>th</sup>. This will not only lessen the likelihood of having to stand in long lines, but will lessen the amount of work we have to do getting people to the polls and tracking voters on Election Day November 3<sup>rd</sup>.
5. The Operation Voter Turnout Committee in the local church will follow up with congregants in the local church beginning October 5<sup>th</sup> to see who applied for Absentee Ballot and follow thru. Those who will not vote by absentee ballot will be encouraged to vote early beginning on October 12<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>.
6. The Committee will compile a list of those who are voting by absentee ballot and those who are voting early. Periodically beginning October 19<sup>th</sup> the Committee will follow up with congregants to see who completed the absentee ballot process and those who voted early. Follow up will continue on October 26<sup>th</sup> and October 29<sup>th</sup>.
7. Saturday, October 31<sup>st</sup> the Committee will follow up to see who has not yet voted and encourage them to vote on Tuesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Polls open at 7AM and close at 8PM. Committee will inquire who needs transportation and seek to assist if necessary.
8. The Committee will ask congregants to encourage their family, friends, neighbors and co-workers to also vote. Each congregant will be asked to commit to get 10 people to vote. Ask them to turn in the names and contact info of their 10 people. Committee will reach out to them.

9. If anyone has problems voting they should be directed to call the Election Protection Hotline for free and non-partisan advice – 1-866-OUR-VOTE or 1-866-687-8683.