

VIDEO: Remaining faithful as we approach Election Day

LINK: <https://vimeo.com/1024831702>

Summary

In a pastoral message to the Greater Northwest Area, Bishop Cedrick D. Bridgeforth addresses a turbulent election season, encouraging people to vote prayerfully and considerately and emphasizing the ripple effects of voting on communities. He highlights the importance of peacekeeping, celebrating differences, caring for the vulnerable and staying true to our church's mission to make disciples. The bishop reiterates the significance of unity and well-being, urging everyone to show up for one another in faith and love.

Transcript

Well, friends, I'm coming to you in the midst of what many are experiencing as a turbulent election season. Many are afraid; many are deeply concerned about what's happening in the United States and what will happen on the heels of our upcoming national elections. I want to remind you that voting is an act of faithful citizenship.

We're called to be faithful in all manner of activity. And as you vote, and yes, vote, vote, vote, as you vote, be prayerful, be considerate of your neighbors and of your neighborhood, those known and unknown, because everything we vote for or against has a ripple effect in this day and in the days to come.

How you respond when you vote says something about your discipleship. It says something about how you view the world and what you value. So yes, be in deep prayer and vote.

I want to encourage you, from my standpoint as your bishop. I don't step into political matters with you or tell you what to vote for or what to vote against, but I do want to share some principles with you that I think may be helpful in this season and in the coming days; that it's important for us to be peacekeepers of amid division.

There are many divisions in our households, in our communities, and definitely around the world. But we are called to be peacemakers, peacekeepers. So, bring the peace of Christ into every situation that you find yourselves in. Consider great words of peace. and actions that point us toward peace.

Build bridges across differences. All of us are created uniquely. All of us created in the image and likeness of God. Yet all of us are very different. We come to relationships with different experiences and expectations. We don't all have to be the same in order to stay in the same conversation or live in the same country. So, we can name those differences, celebrate them, and trust that they make all of us better, and call us to a deeper connection with one another.

I would say to continue to care for the vulnerable in your midst. And yes, as you hear me, you may recognize that you are vulnerable in a variety of ways. No matter what privileges we hold or deny, we sit at a point in history where who we are can be threatened at any point. And so, it's important for us to be aware of those who are on the margins and those who are being pushed to the margins by harmful rhetoric and potential policies and laws that could have us even more deeply divided and disconnected from one another.

November 5th will come, and it will go. What will remain is our mission. Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. First and foremost, we claim that we are disciples of Jesus Christ. We do the work that matters in the world, to bring about the transformation for all of creation. Not just for the human parts of it, but for all parts of our creation.

And our mission will not change November 5th, November 6th, or in the days that will follow. Much will happen. Some of it will be to some's delight. Some of it will not. But we must remain resolute in our commitment to our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ. To be that peaceful presence. To bridge the divides that exist between us. And to celebrate the differences that make us the wonderful creation that God put forth in the world.

And finally, friends, I want to remind you that over this time that I've been with you, we've focused on going and doing likewise. Looking to the story of the Good Samaritan and finding ways in which we might serve one another and walk together in love and in unity.

And in this season, we're also focusing on what it means to be well, and being well. Well, we need it now more than ever to where we really look to one another. We look to God, and we trust the prayers that we pray will strengthen us. We trust that the relationships we have with one another will encourage us. We trust the experience of God showing up time and time again to carry us ahead as a people of faith.

So may we pray, may we show up with and for one another, and may we be about the business of being well in this day and in the days to come.

God bless you.