

WGPC Advocacy By The Numbers: Voting Rights Fall 2022

The Presbyterian Church (USA) Office of Public Witness encourages congregations to facilitate the democratic process. With the midterm elections over, here is a summary of what we have been doing

(For more information, check this link:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/Voter-Suppression-Discussion-Guide.pdf>)

See how our Advocacy Team coordinated WGPC's congregation, sister churches with Churches Together for Justice, and community organizations to help ALL voices be heard through their votes. Our partners include:

Peace UCC Church
Emmanuel Episcopal Church
First Congregational Church
Holy Redeemer
2nd Baptist Church in Richmond Heights
Alliance for Interracial Dignity
North Webster Neighborhood Coalition
League of Women Voters - STL Metro
St. Louis Area Voter Protection Coalition
Missouri Voter Protection Coalition
WGPC Agape Youth Group
St. Francis Xavier Church Photo ID Project
Ashreif Foundation
Metropolitan Congregations United

A very grateful THANK YOU to every one of our GOTV Midterms 2022 volunteers!

The tasks listed below, set by the PCUSA Public Witness Office, are practical. Check out our GOTV numbers.

1. Help register voters

- 38 - New Voter Registration Solicitors

With the new restrictions on voter registrations per HB 1878, anyone registering more than 10 voters in any election cycle must complete and submit a Voter Registration Solicitor application for approval to the MO Secretary of State's Office. 38 people applied and were approved to register MO voters.

46 - New Voters registered

New Voters were registered at various community events, new citizen naturalization ceremonies, and at schools.

2. Help voters get the required ID

15 - Volunteers Trained

96 - Hours Volunteered

We connected with the St. Francis Xavier Church and the Ashreif Foundation Voter ID Clinics to receive training and to help clients get documents needed for MO issued state IDs.

1 - Giddings-Lovejoy Presbytery Mobile Voter Photo ID Clinic

In the works with help from our Giddings Lovejoy Presbytery, this clinic should be in place prior to the 2024 election. Photo IDs are also be needed for other uses such as employment, etc.

3. Publicize information about elections and polling locations

2500 - Postcards Sent

300 - Letters Sent

36 - Volunteers

1250 - Election Day Voting Information Palm Cards

1 - Community Informational Meeting about HB1878

50 - Attendees at September Community Informational Meeting

Over four 'Pizza and Postcard' sessions lasting 3 hours each, 2500 reminder and informational postcards were addressed, stamped and mailed to Black women who are registered to vote but do not vote consistently in the City of St. Louis. The postcards, which were mailed October 29-30, provided voting day and polling place information.

Letters with 300 personal notes on why voting is important to us and encouraging voters to get out to vote were sent.

Election Day Voting Information Palm Cards were distributed to the community through various churches, businesses, and community

organizations in the ten days prior to the election.

Denise Lieberman, head counsel and coordinator of the MO Voter Protection Coalition, spoke about the new voting laws and restrictions at an evening event for the entire community in an effort to present correct information and answer questions about confusing new changes put in place by HB1878.

4. Provide transportation for members of your congregation and the communities in which you live. Ensure that seniors and others are able to get to the polls or to vote by absentee ballot.

5 - Drivers

Five volunteers were connected with the A. Philip Randolph Institute's Souls to the Polls program which offers free rides to the polls.

100 - Senior/Assisted Living Centers Calls
10 - Call Volunteers

Phone calls were made to managers of Senior Living Centers in St. Louis City and County to offer information on the new voting photo ID requirements and to remind them to check on their residents' IDs prior to Election Day.

5. "Lift Every Voice", the resolution from the 218th General Assembly to affirm the 1965 Voting Rights Act, calls upon Presbyterians to volunteer to be poll watchers. A poll watcher is instructed on how to monitor activities at a local polling station to ensure the electoral process is fair and open to all registered to vote at that station. The General Assembly has encouraged presbytery and synod representatives in their own areas to monitor local and state election laws, registration laws, and the use of voting machines to help ensure free, fair elections for all.

50 - Poll Monitors
240 - Hours Worked at Polling Places on Election Day

Volunteers were trained by the MO Voter Protection Coalition and worked as Field Monitors at polling places in the City and County, assisting voters as needed by making hotline calls to lawyers at the MO Voter Protection Coalition 'Command Center' to resolve voting issues and to insure everyone had the opportunity to have their voice heard through their ballot.

9 - Sign Volunteers
91 - Voter Protection Hot Line Call Signs placed

72 - Hours worked placing and picking up signs

Signs giving information about the MO Voter Protection Hotline were placed at city and county polling places. Volunteers also picked up and returned signs after the election. A much appreciated but time consuming task, placement of these signs were invaluable to voters who did not have a Voter Protection Field Monitor at their polling places.

As the PCUSA Office of Public Witness states, “We must stand firmly in the tradition of Jesus, Amos, Isaiah, and Hosea, who chastised those who neglect matters of justice and mercy. We are all a part of the struggle for racial equality and for an end to voter suppression.”

If you would like to be placed on the Voting Rights Volunteer list for upcoming elections, contact Julie Burchett at burchett.juliekay@gmail.com.

If you would like to opt in to the monthly WGPC Advocacy newsletter and find more volunteer opportunities and information, contact Julie Wood at juliewood66@mac.com.